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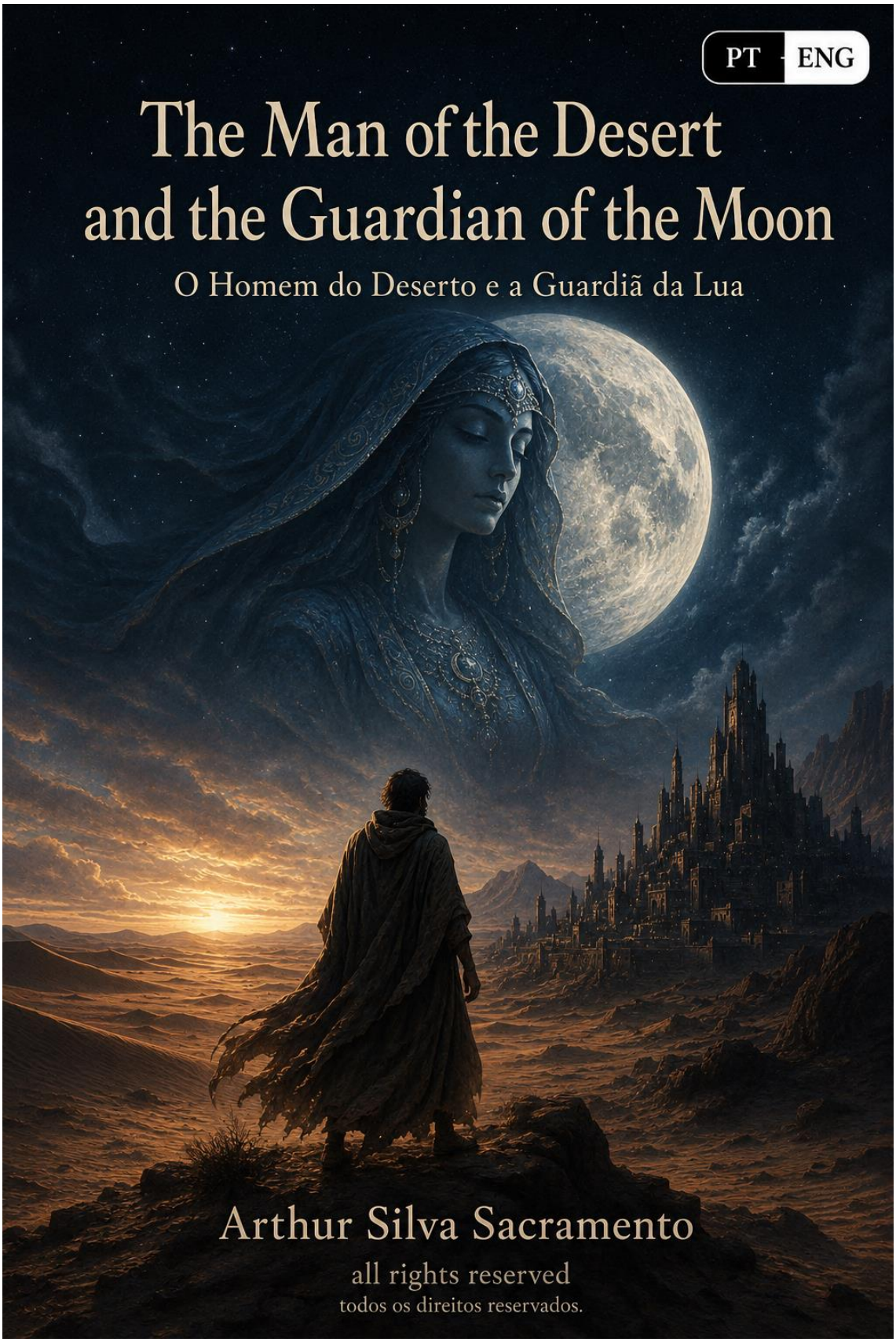
The Man of the Desert and the Guardian of the Moon

O Homem do Deserto e a Guardiã da Lua



Arthur Silva Sacramento

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Preface

There is a particular kind of solitude that has nothing to do with being alone. It is the solitude of standing in the middle of a crowd and feeling farther from every other soul than a man lost in an empty desert. This is the solitude that runs through the pages that follow — not as a wound to be pitied, but as a strange kind of ground to stand on.

O The Man of the Desert and the Guardian of the Moon tells the story of a man shaped entirely by sand, silence, and an unshaken intuition that God is real. He has no scripture, no teacher, no congregation — only the sky, the guardians who visit his imagination, and a faith that asks for no proof. When rumor of a storm sends him toward a distant city of towers, he steps into a world built on precisely the things he has never needed: appearances, hierarchies, and the comfort of belonging to a majority. What he finds there is not evil in any dramatic sense, but something quieter and, in its way, more corrosive — a people who have made peace with lukewarmness, who punish goodness and wickedness alike, and who mistake the volume of their certainty for the depth of their understanding.

This is not a book that asks to be agreed with. It is closer to a confession, or a long night of thinking aloud — feverish, repetitive, unfinished in places, the way real thought so often is. Its images return and circle back on themselves, as deserts do, as grief does, as prayer does. Read it less as an argument and more as a companion for anyone who has ever wondered whether their own solitude might, in fact, be a form of clarity.

Above all, this is a book about the search for something to hold onto when no one around you can be trusted to hold you — and the discovery that the ground was there all along.

Prefácio

Existe um tipo particular de solidão que nada tem a ver com estar sozinho. É a solidão de estar no meio de uma multidão e se sentir mais distante de qualquer outra alma do que um homem perdido em um deserto vazio. É essa solidão que atravessa as páginas a seguir — não como uma ferida a ser lamentada, mas como uma espécie de chão estranho onde se pode ficar de pé.

O homem do deserto e a guardiã da lua conta a história de um homem moldado inteiramente pela areia, pelo silêncio e por uma intuição inabalável de que Deus é real. Ele não tem escritura, nem mestre, nem congregação — apenas o céu, os guardiões que visitam sua imaginação e uma fé que não pede provas. Quando o rumor de uma tempestade o empurra em direção a uma cidade distante repleta de torres, ele entra em um mundo construído exatamente sobre aquilo de que ele nunca precisou: aparências, hierarquias e o conforto de pertencer a uma maioria. O que ele encontra ali não é um mal de forma dramática, mas algo mais silencioso e, a seu modo, mais corrosivo — um povo que fez as pazes com a mornidão, que pune igualmente a bondade e a maldade, e que confunde o volume da sua certeza com a profundidade da sua compreensão.

Este não é um livro que pede concordância. É mais próximo de uma confissão, ou de uma longa noite de pensamentos ditos em voz alta — febril, repetitivo, inacabado em certos trechos, como costuma ser o pensamento verdadeiro. Suas imagens retornam e giram sobre si mesmas, como fazem os desertos, como faz o luto, como faz a oração. Que se leia menos como um argumento e mais como uma companhia para quem já se perguntou se a própria solidão poderia ser, na verdade, uma forma de clareza.

Acima de tudo, este é um livro sobre a busca por algo a que se possa agarrar quando ninguém ao redor merece confiança para nos amparar — e sobre a descoberta de que o chão sempre esteve ali.

Preface II

English

There is a silence that only the desert knows. It is not the silence of emptiness, but the silence of gestation—where the wind sculpts the dunes and the sun etches its truth into the skin of the wanderer. This book was born from that silence.

The Man of the Desert and the Guardian of the Moon is not merely a story; it is a pilgrimage. It is an attempt to understand what remains of a soul when all the world's theaters—its temples, its academies, its golden thrones—are stripped away. What is left when we are free from the judgment of the "sages" and their lukewarm morality?

In these pages, you will encounter New Babylon, a city that shines with the deceitful gleam of sand. It is a metropolis of the spirit, where quantity is mistaken for quality, where truth is whatever the majority dictates, and where the greatest sin is to be either too good or too evil. Its inhabitants fear the angel as much as the demon, for both demand a passion, a commitment, and a fire that they have long abandoned.

Against this backdrop walks the Man of the Desert. He is a paradox: unlettered yet deeply intuitive, poor in goods yet rich in faith, achingly solitary yet never truly alone. He speaks with the raw elements—the Sun, the Moon, the Ocean, the Wind—not as metaphors, but as living entities, guardians of a divine geometry that the city has long forgotten. His journey asks a question that echoes through every generation: *Is it not possible that a prostitute's touch brings us closer to God than a priest's cold ritual? Is it not possible that a wild wolf and a black cat are holier company than a palace full of deceit?*

This book is an invitation to walk with him. It is for those who feel the weight of the world's mediocrity pressing on their chest; for those who have been judged by others without ever being heard; for those who suspect that the greatest miracle is not gold, but a single gaze that truly sees their soul.

Do not look here for easy answers. Look instead for the courage to stand on the margins, to see the stars reflected in another's eyes, and to discover that sometimes, the poison of society is the very remedy for the soul. Remember: *The greater the solitude and the darkness, the brighter the glow that only a single beam of light can have.*

Prefácio: Do Deserto e da Luz

Português

Há um silêncio que só o deserto conhece. Não é o silêncio do vazio, mas o silêncio da gestação—onde o vento esculpe as dunas e o sol grava a sua verdade na pele do andarilho. Este livro nasceu desse silêncio.

O Homem do Deserto e a Guardiã da Lua não é meramente uma história; é uma peregrinação. É uma tentativa de compreender o que resta de uma alma quando todos os teatros do mundo—seus templos, suas academias, seus tronos dourados—são despojados. O que sobra quando estamos livres do julgamento dos "sábios" e da sua moral morna?

Nestas páginas, você encontrará a Nova Babilônia, uma cidade que brilha com o fulgor enganoso da areia. É uma metrópole do espírito, onde a quantidade é confundida com a qualidade, onde a verdade é o que a maioria dita, e onde o maior pecado é ser demasiadamente bom ou demasiadamente mau. Seus habitantes temem tanto o anjo quanto o demônio, pois ambos exigem uma paixão, um compromisso e um fogo que eles há muito abandonaram.

Contra esse pano de fundo caminha o Homem do Deserto. Ele é um paradoxo: inculto, mas profundamente intuitivo; pobre em bens, mas rico em fé; dolorosamente solitário, mas nunca verdadeiramente só. Ele conversa com os elementos brutos—o Sol, a Lua, o Oceano, o Vento—não como metáforas, mas como entidades vivas, guardiãs de uma geometria divina que a cidade há muito esqueceu. Sua jornada lança uma pergunta que ecoa através de cada geração: *Não será possível que o toque de uma prostituta nos aproxime mais de Deus do que o ritual frio de um sacerdote? Não será possível que uma loba selvagem e uma gata preta sejam companhia mais santa do que um palácio cheio de enganos?*

Este livro é um convite para caminhar com ele. É para aqueles que sentem o peso da mediocridade do mundo a pressionar-lhes o peito; para aqueles que foram julgados pelos outros sem nunca serem ouvidos; para aqueles que suspeitam que o maior milagre não é o ouro, mas um único olhar que verdadeiramente vê a sua alma.

Não procure aqui respostas fáceis. Procure, em vez disso, a coragem de estar à margem, de ver as estrelas refletidas nos olhos de outro, e de descobrir que, por vezes, o veneno da sociedade é o próprio remédio da alma. Lembre-se: *Quanto maior a solidão e a escuridão, maior é o brilho que apenas um feixe de luz pode ter.*

Arthur Silva Sacramento – O homem do deserto e a guardiã da lua.

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Quanto maior a solidão e a escuridão maior é o brilho que apenas um feixe de luz pode ter.

Era uma vez a história de um homem que viveu a vida inteira isolado no deserto. O homem do deserto nunca conheceu nenhuma pessoa na vida. Apenas a guardiã da lua e a guardiã do sol.

O homem do deserto mesmo nunca tendo sido batizado ou lido nenhum livro, nem mesmo a bíblia, tinha uma grande intuição de que Deus existia e era verdadeiro. Mesmo parecendo grosseiro ele tinha o mais importante, a fé.

Com rumores de uma grande tempestade se aproximando, ele decidiu partir para uma cidade muito distante, mas cujas torres eram visíveis. Ele acreditava que os demônios espirituais eram mais inofensivos do que os materiais, caso existissem lá.

A Nova Babilônia, a grande cidade do deserto, de longe parecia ser o centro do mundo. Afinal de contas, em nenhum lugar havia torres tão altas quanto ali, apesar de todas elas serem feitas de areia e não de honra. Em sua imensa ingenuidade, o homem do deserto acreditava que os habitantes daquela cidade teriam almas tão elevadas e perto do céu quanto eram suas torres e mausoléus.

Diante do grande a aparentemente indestrutível portão ele tinha a certeza de que se entrasse ali não poderia mais sair ou escapar. Uma vez dentro da cidade árida, o que mais chamava a sua atenção não era a arquitetura daquele local, mas seus sábios. Os sábios daquela cidade não queriam apenas castrar e acorrentar todos os demônios, mas também todos os anjos.

Aqueles sábios odiavam profundamente os demônios. Só não odiavam mais do que os anjos. Na verdade, eles tinham um grande apreço por tudo aquilo que era morno e neutro. Puniam de forma cruel tanto aqueles que fossem muito bons e justos quanto os maus.

Eles odiavam os homens maus porque não tinham o ardil, a engenhosidade ou até mesmo a vitalidade e o descaramento necessário para fazer uma ação ainda que má. Por exemplo, como alguém poderia caluniar se fosse mudo? Odiavam com muito mais força e intensidade os homens que eram bons e justos, pois eles consideravam que a sua paz de espírito, serenidade e discernimento ofereciam um remédio melhor do que qualquer erva daninha deles poderiam oferecer, capaz inclusive de curar os olhos de maneira cristalina para que pudesse ver com grande clareza tanto as sombras quanto a luz.

Seus olhos sujos e deformados colocavam a culpa de tudo o que eles viam nos próprios objetos e nas outras pessoas. Eram incapazes de enxergar qualquer defeito ou debilidade que fosse oriunda da sua própria alma, da própria ignorância, mente ou caráter. Eram excelentes em julgar os outros, mas incapazes de julgarem a si mesmos.

Por causa da minha solidão eles me enxergavam de maneira pior do que um bandido ou prostituta. Mesmo que nunca tivesse dito ou feito uma ação má. Ou sequer tido má intenção ou vontade.

Se o preço para me aproximar de Deus for cada vez mais me distanciar deles eu assim irei fazer. O que me incomoda não é ter o desprezo de muitos, mas não ter o apoio de ninguém. Mas, se Deus estiver ao meu lado não precisarei de outra coisa senão dele.

Aqueles sábios, que se consideravam perfeitos e intocáveis, cuja maioria se recusava a conversar com qualquer um que fosse de outra cultura, império, religião ou mesmo de fora, começaram a fazer contra mim aquilo que eles mais sabiam, a fofoca e a calúnia. Começaram a me julgar não pelos meus atos ou por quem eu era, mas segundo a opinião de terceiros e sem nunca me indagar nada.

Diziam entre si *Como pode um homem que não acredita no nosso deus falar sobre justiça e injustiça? Como pode um homem que não acredita em deus saber o que é certo e o que é errado?*

Os sábios daquela cidade o declaram herege. Afirmavam C*omo assim?Queres provar a existência de Deus através da natureza ou de um contato direto? Pior ainda, ousai dizer que no corpo de uma mulher, assim como em feixe de luz ou onda do oceano, reside o segredo para alcançar tanto o paraíso quanto o inferno?*

Afirmavam com ar de superioridade *Como um homem que afirma ter a espiritualidade de uma nuvem também teria um desejo tão carnal e quente como a areia do deserto?*

Já farto das suas mesquinharias e meias-verdades comecei a falar apenas tudo aquilo que havia no meu coração. Nem mais e nem menos. Sem me preocupar se os poderia ofender profundamente ou até mesmo chocá-los.

Ah! Guardiã do sol... A única mulher que me apaixonei nessa vida.

Eu consigo ver o reflexo de cada estrela divina olhando nos olhos dela.

Olhando nos olhos dela eu consigo ver não apenas as profundezas da minha alma, mas também cada canto desse universo sublime e perfeito.

Se Deus é o meu chão, ou seja, a base que não me deixaria cair, poderia dizer que ela é o meu jardim.

A alegria e vontade de viver que ela me dá é tão grande quando a de Deus ou do sol.

Os olhos dela são tão belos quanto a luz do sol.

Somente um milagre seria capaz de aproximar uma moça de alguém tão solitário quanto eu.

E se por grande ironia, loucura ou linha torta desse mundo...

Tocando ela eu estaria mais próximo de Deus do que tocando as cadeiras dos seus templos sujos e corrompidos?

E se vendo ela nua eu estivesse mais perto do paraíso do que dentro dos seus tempos podres, imundos e mentirosos?

E se ela me aproximasse mais de Deus do que todas as palavras que vocês poderiam dizer?

E se a prostituta, mesmo com todas as suas falhas, ainda fosse mais pura e nobre do que qualquer um dos seus sacerdotes?

Se existe algo nesse mundo capaz de me dar vontade de viver porque não o poderia considerar sagrado ou divino? Por que não poderia considerar que me aproxima de Deus?

Quando tudo estiver escuro eu sei que Deus ou ela podem me iluminar. Mas vocês não.

Desde esse dia, em que falei essas coisas, eles nunca mais falaram comigo. Começaram a me olhar torto, com cara de nojo e de desprezo. Nunca mais me convidaram para seus jantares e banquetes, mas a verdade é que mesmo com toda a sua carne, vinho e ouro eu nunca me senti feliz entre eles. Jogaram-me na sarjeta sem nada. Mas até agora Deus proveu. E proverá.

Eu prefiro comer uma comida simples e humilde ao lado de quem me entende do que comer um banquete ou comida luxuosa ao lado de quem não me entende. Prefiro a companhia daqueles que basta a presença para preencher o meu vazio do que a companhia daqueles que tentam me comprar com ouro e com migalhas.

Desde esse dia começaram a me olhar com mais ódio do que o diabo olhava para Jesus Cristo. Começaram a fazer de tudo para me derrubar. Mas até agora não conseguiram. Até agora os poderosos e os superiores, os intocáveis e indestrutíveis, não conseguiram derrotar algo que está em todos os lugares e em lugar nenhum: O sentimento de profunda solidão. Tentam, tentam, tentam me derrubar de todas as formas inimagináveis, mas até agora ainda não conseguiram me derrubar. E eu me pergunto o motivo de eles não conseguirem me derrubar mesmo ou sendo aparentemente mais fraco e vulnerável do que eles

Será que ao tentar me atacar e humilhar eles estão apenas tentando ferir os próprios olhos e a própria sombra deles? Finalmente me decidi afastar deles, de todos eles, pois tudo aquilo que dissesse iriam considerar loucura ou uma afronta, mesmo que não fosse minha intenção. Mas, como alguém pode fugir da própria sombra?

Para uma planta crescer saudável parece que ela precisa de um pouco de luz e um pouco de sombra.

O advogado do diabo e a serpente diziam que se deveria amenizar a situação deles. Afinal de contas, naquela cidade cada geração se tornava pior e mais miserável do que anterior. Justos ou injustos eles estão carregando um fardo real, viver em uma sociedade decadente. Não era vantajoso que ali alguém fosse honesto ou integro. A única maneira de aliviar seu sofrimento e náusea, a o seu único escudo psicológico era acreditar que a mediocridade era uma coisa boa, já que, dela não poderiam escapar e nem seriam recompensados por algo bom ou demasiadamente mal que fizessem. Até mesmo os sujeitos mais bobos ingênuos percebiam a malicia daquele local. Só permanecia ali quem fosse igual a eles ou louco. Quem já não tivesse nada mais a ganhar ou perder.

Eles insistiam dizendo: Será que ali não há nada que compense suas mentiras? Nem mesmo a beleza de suas mulheres e o brilho de suas jóias falsas?

Como aqueles homens poderiam olhar o mundo de maneira tão má e maldizer tanto a própria vida se eles mesmos que construíram esse mundo? Como poderiam ser fazer de vitimas ou de coitados se eles mesmos fizeram e criaram as próprias leis, regras e verdades, talhando cada detalhe desse mundo a sua imagem e semelhança?

Deixo deles se divertirem entre eles. Agora não quero estar apenas a margem daquela cidade, mas também de todas as palavras que eles dizem e inventam. Qualquer coisa que eles tentem me incluir ou dizer sobre mim eu quero estar a margem de seus julgamentos e de suas verdades.

Demorei a perceber a sutileza das coisas. Tudo naquela cidade era motivado por má vontade e pela inveja. De decorassem a bíblia era por má intenção. Se inventassem a justiça ou algo aparentemente bom era com uma má intenção. E até mesmo se dessem o pão era com má intenção ou por vaidade. Ali nada era o que parecia. Ali tudo era uma grande ilusão.

Não se pode subestimar o quanto um escravo pode amar as próprias correntes.

O homem do deserto aprendeu uma dura lição que relutou durante a vida inteira. Agora ele deveria andar com uma espada, uma cimitarra. Não obstante, deveria manter ela sempre afiada mesmo que nunca fosse necessário utilizá-la. Aquele povo, então começou a julgá-lo como um criminoso ou bandido, ainda que usasse a espada apenas para se defender. E até então nunca precisou utilizá-la.

De todas as pessoas que havia naquela cidade, talvez milhões ou infinitas, somente o guardião dos oceanos e a guardiã da lua conseguiram enxergar a alma do homem do deserto e como ele realmente era, cessando a sua infinita solidão.

Aquele povo odiava a verdade tanto quanto a mentira. Odiavam o bem tanto quanto o mal. Odiavam a riqueza tanto quanto a pobreza. A única coisa que eles amavam era mediocridade!

Ao contrário do que eles pensam a solidão nunca me incomodou, apenas o julgamento deles.

Eles vêem apenas aquilo que querem ou inventam. Dê o paraíso e verão o inferno. Dê o inferno e verão o paraíso.

Aqueles sábios odiavam profundamente a prostituição. Só não odiavam mais do que a solidão. Odiavam um homem solitário muito mais do que uma prostituta. A solidão por si mesma nunca me incomodou, o que me incomodava eram seus julgamentos.

Aqueles sábios tinham uma grande dificuldade em distinguir o bem do mal. Se não conseguiam distinguir o bem do mal também não conseguiam enxergar os nuances, os detalhes e os gradientes entre uma coisa e outra. O contexto e as circunstancias que poderiam tornar uma letra ou palavra injusta era impensável. Mesmo assim, se consideravam perfeitos e intocáveis. O que pensariam se tivessem que fazer algo absurdo a mando de Deus para provar a sua fé, como sacrificar próprio o filho em uma grande pedra, tendo como única garantia de que *Deus proverá*?

Se eles eram doentes ou caídos também enxergavam o mundo de tal maneira. Buscavam a riqueza e prosperidade destruindo as coisas dos outros, sejam elas materiais ou espirituais, ao invés de construírem algo para si mesmo. E assim criaram uma sociedade onde todas as verdades absolutas e leis são autodestrutivas, ou na melhor das hipóteses, hipócritas.

A bondade daquele homem nunca foi reconhecida. Assim como de fosse uma moeda de troca como o ouro, mas que um mercador que se recusa a ser pago por pura ignorância ou vaidade.

Pensando somente em si veio a ruína social. Pois ninguém mais confiava na moeda ou produto que recebesse com medo de que fosse adulterado. Por um lado os senhores tinham a desconfiança de que os servos e escribas os roubassem e traíssem, e por outro lado tais escribas e servos eram muito preguiçosos e prefeririam morrer a trabalhar ou ganhar tão pouco. Por culpa da desconfiança e miséria acumulada naquele lugar, não só material como principalmente espiritual, o comércio ia morrendo, junto com toda a sua história, moeda e promessa de alguma dignidade ou prosperidade futura. Por culpa da preguiça e do desapego aqueles senhores cada vez menos tinham gente para explorar, e maltratar. Era notável que na Nova Babilônia cada vez menos as pessoas tinham filhos, e era apenas uma questão de tempo para aquele povo ou civilização sumir ou desaparecer completamente.

Que grande feito se poderia esperar de um povo ou civilização morna? Nenhum. Qual seria o grande herói desse povo por mais que fosse o mais cruel dos assassinos ou o mais puro dos santos? Na verdade, esse povo nunca teve nenhum herói. E nem mesmo haveria alguma ruína de sua cidade pois tudo o que fizeram era usando apenas areia, matéria barata e abundante, assim como a alma deles. Esse povo nunca fez nenhuma descoberta científica, astronômica ou filosófica. Nem mesmo sequer poética. O que se poderia esperar era uma hipocrisia doentia onde quanto mais vazias fossem as palavras mais valiosas e verdadeiras elas pareciam.

Uma serpente sussurrava no ouvido do homem do deserto perguntando se lá não haveria nenhuma compensação para tanta decadência, nem mesmo a beleza daquelas mulheres? O que o homem do deserto pensaria ou sentiria caso uma fariséia chamasse pelo seu nome?

E a cobra continuava sussurrando e agitada. E se aquele tom moreno fosse o mais bonito e irresistível que uma pele poderia ter? E se aquele corpo que o homem nunca tocou escondesse mistérios maiores do que a própria cidade, como um atalho que levasse tanto ao paraíso quanto para o inferno? Um atalho que diminuísse a distancia entre o paraíso e o inferno os deixando bem próximos, separados por uma distância menor do que uma agulha.

O homem do deserto nunca teve a pretensão de ser uma imitação caricata de Jesus. Pois quando queria ser ardil era difícil que os próprios anjos ou demônios conseguissem o compreender. Até mesmo porque ele só ouviu falar da bíblia ou de Jesus já muito velho, passando dos trinta ou quarenta anos. Apesar de ter nascido e vivido sozinho no deserto a vida inteira e sem ler nenhum livro, ele sempre teve uma intuição de que Deus existia.

O grande milagre não será se tornar o homem mais rico ou ter todas aquelas mulheres. Era afastar toda aquela solidão mesmo estando sozinho. Não existiria milagre maior nesse mundo do que alguém que realmente fosse capaz de tirar a solidão daquele homem.

Aquela solidão, mesmo parecendo tão profunda ou absoluta, precisava de algo infinitamente menor do que um beijo para ser aniquilada. Precisava apenas que alguém conseguisse ver a sua alma tal como ela é?

Mesmo sem o ter conhecido ou ouvido falar sobre ele, o homem do deserto se sentiria feliz se pudesse pisar no mesmo chão que Jesus pisou. Se tivesse o privilégio de olhar para o mesmo céu que um dia Jesus Cristo olhou.

No final das contas, o que é a espiritualidade? E se nesse mundo louco aquela mulher servisse para aproximar ele de Deus?

E se até mesmo o canto dos pássaros servissem para aproximar ele de Deus? Assim como a cadÊncia de cada estrela ou nuvem.

Como alguém poderia provar que Deus, a religião ou espiritualidade não existem se basta à boa vontade ou fé de um individuo para que elas existam? Uma parte de Deus existe em todos nós. Se ninguém nega a existência da felicidade ou tristeza não haveria sentido em se negar a fé ou algo espiritual pois, se pudesse explicar de forma grosseira, primeiro se materializam dentro do sujeito e depois são exteriorizadas, embora nada impressa o contrário. A prova disso é a diferença de interpretação que alguém como discernimento e sem discernimento pode ter sobre a mesma escritura. Como a mesma palavra pode tocar algu

Não é uma questão apenas de fé ou autoconhecimento, mas de descobrir os arquétipos. Cada deserto e nuvem que existe na mente humana. Cada monstro e Oasis que se esconde nas profundezas da consciência, da mente, da alma, do pensamento e dos sentimentos.

E desde aqueles tempos, quais seriam os arquétipos que sempre existiram e existirão enquanto houver a humanidade?

No final das contas, será que toda a solidão daquele homem foi em vão? Assim como todas as vezes que ele se admirou olhando para as estrelas do céu através do reflexo dos olhos dela?

Somente alguém muito ingênuo poderia achar que salvaria aquele lugar ou transformaria para melhor. Até mesmo o homem do deserto, o homem mais simples e ingênuo de todos, sabia disso. A melhor coisa que alguém que teve o azar de nascer na Nova Babilônia e nunca foi corrompido poderia fazer era fugir o quanto antes daquele local.

Para aqueles homens o importante era o material. O importante era o número de mulheres que alguém poderia acumular e não o amor que poderia sentir por apenas uma. O importante era o tamanho das torres ou palácios que poderiam construir e não o seu odor e calor insuportáveis. Aqueles homens só eram capazes de enxergar a quantidade das coisas e não a sua qualidade.

E assim também faziam em seus templos e academias tais “homens da quantidade”. Ora, se um templo está lotado é por que ali há fé verdadeira e nobres ensinamentos! Ora, se a maioria das pessoas acredita em uma coisa então ela se torna verdadeira, uma verdade absoluta e inquestionável.

Naqueles templos homens e mulheres iam para gritar na tentativa de expulsar os demônios da própria mente ou corpo. Mas, na verdade, não há e nunca houve nenhum demônio. Porque eles próprios são os demônios.

Para eles migalhas de ouro valiam mais do que qualquer aspecto moral, físico ou espiritual. Tanto é que todos os crimes daquele lugar eram passiveis de fiança. E até mesmo o paraíso tinha um preço que poderia ser pago em ouro.

Eram inábeis em ver a diferença entre o dia e a noite e o nuance que há entre um e outro. Totalmente desinteressados e preguiçosos para diferenciar a luz das sombras, a mosca das abelhas, o joio do trigo, a água do vinho e os ossos sanguinolentos da carne de peixe. Tinham um grande apreço pelas coisas mornas e neutras.

Nunca fui aceito no templo deles apenar por viver sozinho e ser solitário. Apesar disso, não existe algo mais bonito nessa vida quando um grupo de pessoas realmente querem alcançar a Deus.

O seu refúgio era meramente a vontade da maioria. E é algo que nunca entrou na minha cabeça ser julgado conforme a opinião de terceiros ao invés de ser julgado por aquilo que sou ou fiz.

Quanto menos eles conheciam as coisas mais certeza e arrogância tinham em seus julgamentos. Negavam-se a conversar ou trocar ensinamentos com quem fosse de outra cultura ou tivesse uma inclinação intelectual ou espiritual levemente diferente. Tinham um grande desprezo não só pela verdade, como por tudo aquilo que envolvesse o caráter e a dignidade. Quanto mais miseráveis e injustos eram mais nobres e superiores se consideravam.

O homem do deserto nunca teve a vaidade ou a pretensão de ser uma imitação caricata de Jesus, mas ele se sentiria feliz se pudesse colocar os pés ou olhar para o mesmo céu que ele olhou.

Como alguém que só consegue ver a quantidade das coisas e não a sua qualidade pode medir ou metrificar a fé, o caráter ou a boa vontade que

Se aqueles homens só eram capazes de ver a quantidade das coisas e nunca a sua qualidade então como poderiam medir ou metrificar o caráter, a fé ou a coragem de alguém? Ou até mesmo a loucura ou o desejo. Se por um lado

Os homens e mulheres iam naqueles templos para gritar, tentando expulsar os demônios que haviam na sua mente, alma ou corpo. Mas , na verdade, nunca houve ou haverá demônio. Porque eles próprios eram os demônios.

A verdade, para eles, não era algo lógico ou racional, mas apenas aquilo que a maioria acredita. E assim também era o valor das coisas. Aquilo que poucos queriam tinha pouco valor.

Aquilo que muitos queriam tinha muito valor. Se ninguém quisesse algo era quase certeza de ser algo desprezível.

Nunca o homem do deserto havia sentido tanta solidão mesmo estando na cidade e cercado de pessoas. Mesmo tendo nascido e vivido a vida inteira no deserto.

Deste modo, como todos tinham má vontade, eles julgavam o carvão como algo ruim em si mesmo, já que, ninguém o lapidaria até se tornar um diamante. Julgavam de modo igualmente desprezível o mármore e o barro, já que, todos eles tinham mãos tortas e nada de bonito poderia sair de onde eles tocassem ou olhassem.

E mesmo com todas essas contradições, aleijamentos e imperfeições, eu duvido existir algum povo no deserto que se orgulhe em falar de Deus mais do que eles!

Mas será que toda aquela multidão junta teria mais fé, caráter ou dignidade do que apenas o homem do deserto? Juntos teriam mais melancolia e sombras do que a guardiã da lua? Teriam serenidade e discernimento do que o guardião do oceano?

O perdão tinha um preço que poderia ser parcelado. Pago em forma de escambo ou com prostitutas.

Naquela cidade era uma afronta querer ter uma asa, seja de anjo ou de demônio. Assim como ter o hábito de mergulhar muito fundo no oceano ou de subir no alto de montanhas.

Só alguém muito ingênuo poderia acreditar que mudaria aquele lugar ou transformá-lo em algo melhor.

Se chamasse eles de demônios ao invés de seres humanos estaria correndo o risco de ser insensível em meus julgamentos. Mas, se chamasse eles de seres humanos estaria sendo injusto com esse grupo ou categoria pois aqueles habitantes não tinham nenhuma humanidade, integridade ou dignidade.

Aqueles sábios não só tinham grande dificuldade e desinteresse em distinguir o bem do mal, as luzes das sombras. Como também tinham dificuldades em diferenciar as moscas das abelhas, a água do vinho, os ossos sanguinolentos da carne do filé dos peixes. Tinham absoluta certeza de que eles eram perfeitos. Então era comum que colocassem a culpa de suas almas e olhos deformados em tudo aquilo que eles olhavam.

Toda essa mediocridade, todas essa mesquinharia, toda essa negatividade, causava um desconforto e uma náusea no homem do deserto difícil de ser descrita. Na cidade e entre pessoas ele sentia uma solidão tão grande que jamais sentiu no deserto, mesmo tendo nascido e vivido a vida inteira lá.

Eu preciso ter fé. Eu preciso ter coragem. Fazer tudo aquilo que está ao meu alcance e deixar o restante nas mãos de Deus. Tudo o que eu preciso é que o espírito santo esteja perto de mim.

Sei que tudo isso pode parecer bobagem. Mas se o chamado fosse real o que custaria me aproximar mais de Deus?

E ainda que o destino fosse viver a vida inteira no deserto, eu julgaria isso como uma provação ou uma benção? Julgaria isso como um livramento, uma maldição ou um milagre? O que quero dizer é e se toda a sujeira em meus olhos e coração sumisse ao ponto de conseguir enxergar o quão cristalina a água é, o quão puro e belo o céu e as nuvens são e o quão lúcida a luz é?

Sei que por mais que pareça abandonado Deus sempre vai enviar um anjo para me protejer.

Pedi a Deus que me enviasse um sinal. Ou que um espírito se manifestasse ou me enviasse um sinal, se é que essas coisas realmente existem. Então as luzes do meu quarto começaram a piscar de uma forma que nunca aconteceu e senti um grande calafrio em todo o meu corpo. Após isso fui caminhar e ao retomar para casa vi o sol no horizonte de forma tão grande, brilhante e bonita como nunca havia visto na vida.

O grande milagre seria ficar rico? Seria ter a mulher mais bonita do mundo? Eu só queria que ele levasse em borá toda essa solidão e ele levou.

Qual é a coisa mais bonita que existe no mundo? O reflexo das estrelas nos olhos dela? Ou o reflexo da profundeza da minha alma nos olhos dela?

Tudo ali fazia crer que era o refúgio dos anjos e dos sábios. Suas promessas de salvação e de prosperidade, que como mágica, tornava tudo isso independente do caráter ou das ações do próprio sujeito. Ora, ora! Descobriram ou inventaram uma maneira, um atalho para conseguir chegar até o paraíso mesmo sendo o sujeito mais canalha, miserável e cruel que já existiu nesse mundo!

Mas se o homem do deserto tinha um defeito era sua infinita ingenuidade e simplicidade, Sua humildade era tão grande que mesmo no inferno, ou diante do maior carrasco, ele se recusaria a reclamar ou teria receio de fazer julgamento errados sobre os outros.

Os sábios daquela cidade não acreditavam na existência do mundo espiritual. Apesar disso, não me sentiria constrangido em ser o oposto deles ou pensar o oposto. Talvez, por essa divergência de princípios nunca fui bem aceito lá. Ainda que tivesse todos os argumentos coerentes e a melhor intenção do mundo, ninguém naquele local me ouviria ou me escutaria.

Os sábios daquela cidade queriam criar um ser que fosse morno, ou seja, que não fosse justo e nem injusto, que não fosse demasiadamente bom e nem mau. Por isso não faziam grandes esforços para distinguir o bem do mal ou a luz da escuridão. Os sábios daquela cidade queriam acorrentar tanto os anjos quanto os demônios os privando de todos os sentimentos, desejos e pulsões.

Os sábios daquela cidade tinham um grande apreço por tudo aquilo que não tinha coração e era morno. Orgulhavam-se disso dizendo que era sua verdade absoluta. Ora, será

que para os olhos de alguém não haveria uma dupla vergonha aí? Tanto por crer em verdades absolutas quanto por

A grande verdade é que eles educavam desde cedo as crianças para ser um tipo de ser amorfo e repulsivo. Um tipo de ser tão bitolado e alienado que seria desprovido de sentir amor ou ódio por qualquer coisa, desprovido de sentir desejo ou nojo por qualquer coisa. O seu valor não residiria naquilo que eles são, mas somente naquilo que eles têm. Os valor de um homem iria se resumir as migalhas de ouro que ela carrega. E até mesmo o seu corpo seria negligenciado, sua mente e sua alma pois suas migalhas de ouro seriam mais importantes do que o seu coração ou do que a sua própria vida.

O que levaria alguém a ter tanta inclinação para tudo aquilo que é morno e neutro? Lá não se contentavam em matar e castrar todos os demônios, mas também todos os anjos. Tudo aquilo que fosse minimamente diferente deles já olhavam com desconfiança.

Seria a inveja, ou o medo, de tudo aquilo que um homem realmente bom ou mal é capaz de fazer? Por que o ódio desses supostos sábios não se dirige somente ao que é muito bom ou mla, mas se dirije a todo excesso de bondade ou maldade?

Oh! Mas ninguém duvidava daquelas verdades absolutas. Tudo já estava tão corrompido, desfigurado e torno que ninguém mais sabia o que era verdade ou mentira. O que faltava corromper ou já estava corromper.

Pois, se tivesse que apostar preferiria acreditar que somente o mundo espiritual existe enquanto o mundo material é uma ilusão.

Ora, como o mundo material não existe? Somente um louco poderia afirmar isso ou alguém que se alimenta de pedras. Então, o que explicaria a tristeza de alguém aumentar conforme a sua riqueza aumenta e alguém se sentir alegre mesmo sem ter nada ou com tão pouco? Sim, temos muitas evidencias de como a riqueza afeta a alma e de como a alma afeta a riqueza, mas nós, ou essa civilização, sempre privilegiamos mais um lado da história ou mais uma interpretação do que outra.

A intenção dos sábios daquela cidade era criar um conhecimento que enfrequesse a alma tantos dos anjos quanto dos demônios.

Ele decidiu ir até aquela cidade mesmo sabendo que dali não poderia sair ou escapar. Ele creditava que a solidão que sentiria entre pessoas seria menor do que a do deserto. e acreditava que os demônios espirituais seriam mais inofensivos do que os materiais.

As leis da Nova Babilônia, seus costumes e verdades absolutas, originaram-se de um povo decadente e miserável já bastante distante de Deus e quase esquecidos por ele. Isso se notava até mesmo em seus provérbios e na suposta sabedoria dos homens e mulheres mais doutos daquele lugar. Diziam mais ou menos coisas parecidas como “O inferno está cheio de boas intenções” e a partir dessa premissa ou princípio construíam todas as demais. Ora, é verdade que mesmo um homem bom ou justo ainda pode cometer injustiças, pois somente Deus é perfeito. Entretanto, eles acreditavam tão fielmente nas próprias idéias que esperavam por uma grande colheita mesmo sem plantar nada. Acreditavam que oferecendo ódio

receberiam amor, oferecendo calúnia receberiam elogios. Apunhalando alguém achavam que seriam recebidos com um abraço. Achavam que cometer injustiças os tornava melhores ou superiores do que os demais.

Tudo aquilo que aquele povo tocava apodrecia. Tudo aquilo que eles olhavam murchava. Tudo aquilo que falavam se tornava mentira. Até mesmo quando falavam de Deus suas palavras se tornavam falsas. Pois falavam aquilo que é verdadeiro em tom de deboche, ironia ou sarcasmo.

Demorei a perceber que aquele povo não tinha compromisso com a verdade, caráter ou com a prosperidade. Seu único interesse era humilhar os demais ainda que nada ganhassem com isso.

Aquela cidade não precisava de inimigos ou guerras para ser destruída, mas apenas do seu próprio povo. As mulheres de lá já não tinham filhos ou não queriam. Os homens de lá ordenavam que as mulheres abortassem. Abandonavam a própria prole no deserto para não gastar mais ouro cuidando dos filhos. Outros, em sua obsessão por decorar falácias e subir na hierarquia social, achavam isso mais divertido ou interessante do que fazer filhos. Era contraditório que mesmo com toda a sua prostituição e vulgaridade a população daquele lugar não parava de cair.

Às vezes o maior mal de todos reside nas coisas que justamente parecem mais normais ou inofensivas. Enquanto que o bem se esconde naquilo que tem uma aparência extremamente monstruosa ou louca.

O palácio que tocava o céu se transformou em ruínas, mas suas sombras permaneciam em nossos olhos por muito tempo, seja por que nossos olhos eram muito ingênuos ou gananciosos. Até sentíamos um pouco da sua sombra fresca, mesmo que a parece, o pilar e o concreto já tivessem desaparecidos há muito tempo. Demorei a perceber, como um miserável que vive no paraíso ou um idiota que vive no inferno, que nenhum homem digno ou mulher justa ficava por muito tempo ali.

A superioridade e nobreza daquele povo só existia na imaginação deles e nos próprios olhos. Eram muito bons em julgar a loucura dos outros, mas não as próprias.

Muito tempo depois o homem do deserto percebeu que naquela cidade todos os homens e mulheres de boa vontade se recusavam a morar ou colocar seus pés. Nenhuma das poucas pessoas dignas que o homem do deserto conheceu permaneceram até a ruína da cidade, somente ele. Se ele tinha medo do demônio de fora da cidade, acabou tendo que enfrentar um muito pior, mas com aparência de inofensivo e até mesmo de vítima. O maior defeito do homem do deserto era a sua simplicidade e ingenuidade excessiva, achando que tudo era bom ou tolerável, achando que tudo o que reluz é ouro. Encontraria ou inventaria uma vantagem ou ponto positivo ainda que vivesse no inferno. A grandiosidade da cidade nada mais era do que uma grande miragem ou ilusão para atrair os mais bobos, miseráveis, desesperados e desavisados, pois o interior de seus habitantes era mais desértico e árido do que o próprio deserto.

A solidão desse homem era infinita. Mas não era maior do que a sua fé ou do que seu amor pela natureza.

A Nova Babilônia não mudaria a vida de ninguém. Apenas lhe destruiria. Iria lhe destruir com a promessa de um paraíso que reside em migalhas de ouro e não no coração ou na boa vontade. Iria lhe destruir com a promessa de uma salvação que só seria alcançada assassinando todos os santos e Deus.

A energia daquele lugar era tão negativa que ninguém passava mais do que uma noite por lá, como a guardiã da noite. A guardiã da noite, como um eclipse, se mostrou apenas uma vez para o homem do deserto. Mas essa única noite jamais foi esquecida pelo homem do deserto, de maneira muito positiva e profunda. É curioso que alguém que se conheceu apenar por uma noite ou dia seja mais importante do que uma multidão de pessoas com o qual se conviveu por toda a eternidade. Já o guardião do oceano parecia ter sido um anjo enviado por deus para ajudar o homem do deserto em seus tormentos mais difíceis e solitários, lhe oferecendo conhecimentos mais valiosos do que ouro ou trigo, e uma abundância de serenidade onde não havia sequer uma gota de água, mas apenas de desespero.

O homem do deserto nunca foi bem visto pelos habitantes da cidade do deserto. Seus sentimentos, caráter ou intenções nunca foram levados em consideração. Naquele lugar só tinha valor quem tivesse mais jóias ou decorasse o maior número de falácias. Podemos até dizer que quanto maior fosse a boa vontade do homem do deserto maior era o desprezo, a hostilidade e a desconfiança com que era tratado pelos demais. Uma serpente sussurrava em seu ouvido dizendo que era costume naquele local que quanto mais injustas as pessoas eram mais elas diziam que eram as vítimas.

Naquela cidade havia um assassino bastante perigoso. Mas, como conseguir capturá-lo se ele está escondido em cada sombra e em cada fresta? Se ele pode se esconder atrás de cada sonho, miragem ou até mesmo atrás do silêncio ou do esquecimento?

Como conseguir derrotá-lo se quanto mais ele é humilhado mais forte ele volta? Se quanto mais ele é desprezado mais independente ele se torna? Se quanto mais silêncio recebe mais seus atos falam ou gritam por si mesmos? Se quanto mais ele é pisado mais sólido ele se torna como se fosse o próprio chão? Se quanto mais o tentam prender mais filhos ele coloca nesse mundo dando continuidade a sua dinastia.

O grande ladrão se tornou o rei da Nova Babilônia. O grande assassino ser tonou o santo e o herói da Nova Babilônia. Esse homem foi lembrado por cada súdito e escriba até o desaparecimento daquela civilização;

Mas ninguém é maior do que Deus.

Mas ninguém é maior do que o tempo.

Vejo que o tempo é o meu melhor aliado. Vejo que o tempo é o meu único justiceiro. Pois tudo veio do pó e para ele voltará.

Quantos indivíduos imbecis existem no mundo, ou que gostam de ser enganados, para acreditar que valor de alguém reside apenas por ter vindo de um lugar ou freqüentado uma cidade? E junto de si carrega inúmeros pergaminhos e papéis inúteis que não valem nada em nenhum lugar do mundo.

Para um homem sem alma o ouro vale muito. Para um homem com a alma de ouro até as pequenas coisas podem ter valor.

Do que adianta ter muito ouro, mas não ter vontade de gastar, não ter onde gastar ou nunca se contentar com aquilo que se gasta?

Por que motivos alguém colocaria os pés ali se a cidade não oferecesse tantas promessas, vantagens e migalhas? Se não oferecesse uma salvação que na verdade se torna autodestruição. Se não parecesse ser o centro do mundo, se o seu povo não parecesse a grande vítima ou o último grão do deserto, se muitos viajantes não estivessem cegos pela própria miséria, esperteza ou ingenuidade? O que seria dessa cidade se nenhum viajante não se sentisse entediado e vazio, considerando que não tem nada a perder a não ser a dignidade? Pois nem o ouro que eles prometiam eles ofereciam!

A solidão de fato é algo ruim. Mas viver entre aquelas pessoas era mais solitário do que o próprio deserto. O que é melhor, se inevitável, uma gota ou uma garrafa de veneno?

Demorei mais ou menos trinta anos vivendo na cidade até me convencer que o veneno deles é o meu remédio e vice-versa.

A cidade do deserto é uma grande miragem que engana até mesmo os mais espertos. A sua sombra, que parece ser refrescante e fruto de algo grandessíssimo , na verdade, é fruto de uma ruína, e é apenas uma questão de tempo até que própria sombra desapareça.

O bem, para combater o mal, não precisa de recompensas.

O bem, para combater o mal, não precisa aplausos ou de promessas.

E se Deus quisesse se vingar desse povo que já não tem o menor resquício de lealdade ou dignidade, tão corrompido que já não sabe mais o que é verdade e nem mentira, já não sabe o que está corrompido ou já se corrompeu, aumentando gradualmente o calor em um ponto insuportável, até que em outro lugar surja um novo povo que não seja corrompido, caído ou doente desde a sua origem ou inicio como esse? Um povo cujo qual fosse desprovido de todas as falhas materiais e mazelas espirituais inatas e inerentes do povo da Nova Babilônia?

Como descobrir aquilo que está escondido na minha mente ou alma? Como a minha imaginação do deserto ou dela completamente nua? O reflexo de cada estrela nos olhos dela quando eu olho dela.

Às vezes o milagre ou a provação depende apenas do rio cujo qual se escolhe a água beber. Tudo está e sempre esteve diante dos olhos. Mas, a grande questão ou pergunta é se queremos abrir os olhos para enxergar ou não. Todos os mistérios deixam de serem mistérios. E todos os problemas são resolvidos. Completamente diluídos. Completamente esquecidos.

As leis, a religião e os costumes daquele lugar originaram-se de um povo totalmente miserável, débil e decadente, e não de um povo nobre ou ambicioso. Assim, todo detalhe e fresta que havia naquele lugar, será no âmbito material, espiritual ou intelectual, era totalmente corrompido e infestado de insetos. A lei, a religião, as verdades absolutas e até a linguagem daquele local eram eivadas ou encharcadas por um espírito pouco nobre e mesquinho, incapaz de enxergar ou considerar qualquer coisa boa que poderia existir nesse mundo.

Aquele povo pagava amor com ódio e boa vontade com má vontade. Não havia coisa no mundo que eles odiassem mais do que a verdade ou alguém com caráter. Quantos menos sabiam ou conheciam algo mais arrogância e certeza tinham em seus julgamentos. Quanto mais injustos e miseráveis eram mais se achavam nobres ou as vítimas.

O que Deus fazia era uma provação ou um fortalecimento? O que Deus fazia era uma punição ou uma benção difícil de ser compreendida?

E mesmo que tivessem a incerteza sobre o dia de amanhã nutriam-se de uma coragem e fé que seriam as únicas coisas capazes de evitar que s

O homem do deserto, em sua imensa simplicidade, entrou na cidade mesmo sabendo que dali não poderia sair. E não sabemos o motivo ao certo, se era para fugir de uma grande tempestade do deserto ou uma provação.

A maioria dos inimigos do homem do deserto é tola. Pois acreditam que derrotando ele estarão aniquilando as próprias sombras ou cegando os próprios olhos.

O homem do deserto é a própria sombra e os próprios olhos de todos aqueles que tentam lhe perseguir ou lhe humilhar.

Durante sua longa jornada, o homem do deserto não passou quarenta dias no deserto, mas toda a eternidade. O homem do deserto nunca teve nenhum amigo. Somente o guardião do oceano.

Se a sua intenção era fugir de um demônio físico ou material ele acabou se deparando com um infinitamente maior. Mas era um demônio espiritual, um demônio invisível e silencioso. Um demônio que não lhe apunhalava com facas mas com o desprezo, com a inderença.

Ele se perguntava se a culpa era sua ou dos outros. Afinal de contas, todos ali diziam que a solidão era algo ruim. E não raro as pessoas daquele lugar consideravam a sujeira que havia em seus olhos como se elas existissem nas próprias coisas. Ou seja, era comum julgarem o ouro ou trigo como se fossem podres quando na verdade a sujeita estava totalmente em seus olhos imundos e doentes.

Pensou que ali teria tos as resposas para suas questões espirituais e materiais. Mas estava completamente enganado.

Aquela cidade era infinitamente miserável. Não só espiritual como economicamente. Era costume que os pais tivessem que escolher entre sacrificar a esposa ou a prole por causa

da falta de alimentos. Mas contraditoriamente ninguém ali queria trabalhar ou plantar ainda que fosse para matar a própria fome. Eles ficavam se lamentando e sempre colocando a culpa em quem não tinha nenhuma. Os habitantes da cidade do deserto ou da areia tinham o estranho costume ou gosto de só desejar aquilo que fosse roubado ou tirado dos outros, ainda que fosse a dignidade ou auto-estima.

Eles se orgulharam dos seus grandes palacetes e mausoléus feitos de areia. Mas do que adianta construir coisas grandiosas, altas ou que parecem douradas se todas as pessoas ali dentro tem o coração vazio?

O principal defeito dos homens e mulheres da cidade do deserto é acreditar que quanto mais bem intencionado é um individuo maior é a ameaça que ele representa. De fato, o inferno está cheio de boas intenções. Mas se não houvesse nenhuma boa intenção ou boa vontade nesse mundo o que restaria dele? Afinal de contas, existe alguém que acredite nascer uma árvore abundante do veneno ou da podridão? Eles são só querem colher muito e serem prósperos mesmo sem fazer ou plantar nada, mas os homens e as mulheres daquele local tem um deleite inexplicável em prejudicar os demais, mesmo que eles saem mais no prejuízo do que as vítimas.

O homem do deserto, às vezes em seu excesso de humildade que beirava um vício, se recusava a apontar aquilo que era certo ou errado com medo de julgar as pessoas de uma forma que não fosse absoluta ou perfeitamente verdadeira. Com medo ou receoso de incomodar os demais, ainda que estivesse certo ou com uma gota de razão. Mais era notório que aquele povo quanto mais miserável era mais nobre se achava. Quanto menos sabiam mais certeza tinham sobre seus julgamentos.Quanto mais injustiças cometiam mais se achavam justos ou as vítimas e assim por diante. Quantos menos alguém dependesse deles mais eles o tratavam com desprezo e humilhação.

Não demorou muito para o homem do deserto perceber que naquela grande cidade, que parecia ser o centro do mundo e a redentora de todas as nobres verdades, das estrelas e da justiça, onde tudo parecida cheio, grandioso ou dourado na verdade não tinha nada. Havia muitos livros, muitas palavras, mas nenhum conhecimento, somente falácias. Havia muitas palavras e discursos bonitos acerta da “ética”, “justiça”, “dignidade”, mas na prática ninguém ali tinha moral para julgar ninguém. E quem se recusasse a colocar uma prole naquele lugar miserável e decadente era visto e humilhado de maneira muito pior do que um ladrão ou assassino.

Os maiores escribas daquele lugar se destacavam pelo uso complicado da linguagem. Mas, por detrás das suas palavras não havia nada. O importante não era o sujeito deter algum conhecimento, mas usar isso como ferramenta para escalar na pirâmide social. Assim sendo as crianças daquele local desde cedo estudavam muito, inúmeras horas, mas quanto mais elas liam menos aprendiam. Aquelas palavras eram carentes de sentido e detrás delas havia apenas a esperteza de se obter o pergaminho que atestava o grande número de falácias ou números que um sujeito fora capaz de decorar. Mas se ele fosse largado no meio da selva, do deserto ou mesmo em outra cidade, não encontraria nenhuma utilidade para tudo aquilo que forçosamente aprendeu.

O homem do deserto em buscar de um remédio ou anestesia para sua solidão percorreu cara buraco, cada viela, cada esgoto e beco fétido daquele lugar, mas percebeu que aquela cidade e seus cidadãos ofereciam mais solidão do que viver a eternidade inteira no deserto. Nada mais os orgulhava do que excluir os outros, mesmo que nada de útil tivessem a oferecer.

O principal erro do homem do deserto foi ter procurado pela verdade ou algo nobre em um ninho de cobras. Mas, como poderia ter se dado conta disso se nasceu lá? Ele sempre viveu rodeado de serpentes, mas nunca se viu ou se enxergou como uma.

Parece que aquilo que alimenta eles é algo muito ruim. E eles estão tão preocupados em alimentar esse sentimento ruim e negativo que acabam esquecendo de cuidar da própria casa, do próprio altar e da colheita da cidade, assim como de qualquer jardim ou da própria alimentação. Por isso não seria exagero dizer que o povo daquele lugar, além dos seus defeitos morais e espirituais, era literal e demasiadamente fraco e feio.

Para compensar a sua fraqueza e feiúra achavam que cometendo injustiças se tornariam fortes.

Certamente o maior defeito do homem do deserto era nunca iniciar uma conversa. O silêncio para ele parecia ser mais um aliado do que um inimigo. Esse traço de caráter ou do espírito fazia os outros lhe enxergarem como um marginal, como um ladrão ou alguém muito desprezível e indesejável. Como ele poderia persuadir e ludibriar as pessoas para pilhar seu ouro ou seduzir as mulheres mesmo sem lhe amar? Naquela cidade o valor dos homens era medido pela quantidade de ouro e de mulheres que tinham. Não levavam em consideração se o ouro fosse roubado ou estivesse sujo de sangue e nem que aquelas mulheres tivessem uma aparência monstruosa, assim como o caráter e o odor.

Para os adoradores do deus da mentira, o homem do deserto era o ser mais desprezível e repugnante que já havia pisado nessa terra ou passado pelo deserto. Mas, em suas ações práticas ele nunca roubou, mentiu, atacou ou criticou ninguém. Mesmo seus sentimentos um pouco eivados ele guardava para si.

Pelo homem do deserto não ter a melhor das aparências ou retórica todas as suas demais qualidades eram desprezadas. Suas palavras não tinham nenhuma importância para os demais, já que, não tinha belos trajes e nem usava belas jóias. Qualquer possibilidade de próspera ou assumir um posto melhor nessa sociedade era boicotado praticamente impedindo de sobreviver naquele local. Para as pessoas daquele lugar tudo se resumia a ter uma boa aparência e retórica. Coisas como “justiça”, “verdade”, “fé”, “caráter”, “honestidade”, “dignidade”, “honra” ou “integridade” eram coisas totalmente estranhas para as pessoas daquele local.

Aquela cidade era tão miserável, tanto moral quanto economicamente, que não havia ninguém para lhe levar a sério ou dá importância às suas palavras. Seus argumentos ou lições pareciam algo como tentar convencer moscas, porcos e abutres de não comer carniça. Aquele lugar era tão árido que nenhuma planta ou fruta crescia naquele lugar.

Os templos daquele lugar eram os locais mais horrorosos que viu antes de cruzar o deserto . Afinal de contas as pessoas iam até o templo com a fé de que choveria ouro do céu e não com um objetivo moral, intelectual ou espiritual. Queriam ganhar ouro não com o suor do próprio trabalho ou talhando a si mesmo, mas mendigando para Deus cujo qual nada a respeito eles queriam conhecer. Iam até os templos com o objetivo de magicamente ficarem ricas e não para fazerem o bem ou aprenderem a fazer algo justo ou digno. Iam até os templos nutrindo esperança pelo milagre de assumir os altos postos daquela sociedade que só o maior dos covardes e canalhas faria jus de exercê-lo. Os templos daquele lugar, apesar de lotados, eram a completa negação de deus, seja qual for ele, e uma distorção da espiritualidade. Ali havia uma grande fé em algo que é o oposto da fé. Uma fé que não servia para iluminar o mundo mas para escurecê-lo Mas, para os homens e mulheres daqueles lugar, a verdade era apenas o que a maioria acreditava ou dizia, ainda que o rebanho estivesse caminhando rumo ao abismo. Então, para esse povo miserável, poder dizer a palavra “deus” era um réfugio e compensação de toda a sua podridão.

No templo eles iam para gritar. Homens e mulheres gritavam para tentar expulsar os demônios da sua alma e consciência. Mas, na verdade, nunca houve ou houvera demônios. Por que eles próprios eram os demônios.

O homem do deserto buscou em cada viela daquela alguém que lhe dissesse a verdade que sempre precisou. O homem do deserto buscou em cada esgoto daquela cidade decadente um refúgio para a sua solidão. Um remédio para a sua solidão. Buscou por uma salvação ou remédio que nenhuma pessoa no mundo poderia lhe dar. Mas percebeu a custa de um oceano de lágrimas de que ninguém no mundo conseguiria ver seu coração ou compreender suas idéias e intenções. Somente Deus e a própria natureza poderiam compreendê-lo.

O homem do deserto teve a oportunidade de ergue a cabeça mais uma vez apenas para poder observar a infinita beleza do céu e do sol.

Todo ódio, desprezo e hostilidade não carrego comigo, mas deixo esse peso somente para eles. Aliás, nada carrego comigo, além do próprio vento e as efêmeras luzes da manhã.

A principal característica do homem do deserto é o quanto ele odeia injustiças. Ele preza pelar justiça mais do que qualquer coisa nesse mundo, até mesmo mais do que ouro ou glória. Esse parece ser o centro da sua personalidade, existência ou conduta. Mas, o homem do deserto às vezes se pergunta quantas coisas existem nesse mundo que não são justas e nem injustas. Por exemplo, imaginar a guardiã do sol completamente nua e a sua pele dourada é algo justo ou injusto? É algo moral ou imoral? Por que na prática ele não está realizado nenhuma ação, não está tocando em ninguém e nem mesmo falando algo. Ele está apenas sonhando. Ou delirando. Ele não está traindo ninguém na imaginação ou em suas intenções, pois sempre viveu sozinho. Ele se pergunta se existem coisas nesse mundo que talvez sejam injustas ou que não sejam nem justas e nem injustas, mas que podem ser uma moeda ou compensação para algo justo, como o incenso, a seda ou o ópio.

O homem do deserto, apesar da sua grande boa vontade e apreço pela justiça, sempre tinha sonhos muitos estranhos. Não raro se imaginava fazendo amor com a guardiã do sol quando o calor do deserto se tornava escaldante. Mas seus sonhos realmente estranhos e

recorrentes eram com uma entidade masculina demasiada gorda e sorridente que se alimentava comendo mulheres. Essas mulheres ficavam guardadas dentro de potes com geléias de frutas ou mel e adormecidas. A entidade então colocava essas mulheres na colher como se cada uma tivesse o tamanho de um grão de arroz ou trigo. Quanto mais a entidade aproximava aquela colher perto da sua boca mais o desejo e calor delas aumentava a ponto de elas começarem a se masturbar e beijarem entre si. O grande clímax ou orgasmo acontecia quando ele literalmente mastigava, esmagava e engolia todas elas e terminava inevitavelmente matando-as.

Outro sonho estranho e recorrente do homem do deserto era estar perdido em infinitas vielas e becos enquanto todas ao redor permaneciam indiferentes. E a única maneira de se salvar era invadindo e pulando o muro de algumas casas.

A relação do homem do deserto com a guadiã da lua também era muito curiosa. Ele não tenha a vontade de tocar ela, mas apenas a curiosidade de ver ela nua. Ele não queria beijá-la mas apenas ver ela fazendo amor com outros ou consigo mesma.

Em seus sonhos e ilusões mais profundas o único desejo do homem do deserto era que as diferenças entre o céu e o oceano se tornassem muito pequenas. Ou que se tornassem praticamente nenhuma. Que todo belo vôo, assim como o de uma borboleta, fosse seguido de uma inevitável queda e vice-versa. Que a diferença entre o amor e a solidão fosse algo demasiadamente sutil assim como a diferença entre o bem e o mal. Entre a verdade e a mentira, entre ser o culpado ou a vítima.

Em cada gota do oceano poderia haver um infinto maior do que ele próprio.

Em cada feixe de luz poderia haver algo mais brilhante e deslumbrante do que o próprio sol.

O beijo dela poderia ferir meu coração mais do que se alguém enfiasse um punhal nele.

Alguma estrela ainda brilharia no céu mesmo que as demais coisas fossem esquecidas.

O homem do deserto tinha a intuição de que em sua menta, alma ou consciência existiam muitos monstros, entidades e lugares, assim como reminiscências e ruínas, cujo qual ele não escolheu ter ou carregar elas consigo.

Tais lugares e entidades, como uma miragem ou ilusão,

Essas entidades, curiosamente, eram órgãos ou células de outras entidades e assim sucessiva e infinitamente.

Basicamente todas as entidades tinham algum tipo de desejo ou imaginação sexual, menos o deus supremo.

Será que é possível alguém ser muito justo em certas coisas e ser muito injusto em outras? Como alguém que às vezes ama e outras bate, que às vezes doa e outras rouba. Será que é possível alguém ser bom em algumas coisa e ser mau em outras? Como alguém que ama

muito uma pessoa e maltrata outra. Será que é possível que alguém possa ser ou fazer infinitas coisas boas ou más, e como poderíamos julga-los? É justo ou injusto? Qual seria a medida da justiça se ela não fosse apenas uma ação, mas infinitas?

A pele dourada dela é uma compensação para qualquer tipo de injustiça que ela possa cometer? Os lábios abundantes dela são uma compensação justa para qualquer mentira ou palavra errada que ela possa dizer? O cabelo e os olhos escuros dela guardam em si mesmos o perdão de qualquer crueldade que possa cometer quando se deixam ser admirados ou tocados? A beleza e a sensualidade dela são uma moeda de troca mais valiosa do que qualquer ficção ou palavra que o homem poderia inventar.

Uma das mulheres que também fez o coração do homem do deserto estremecer foi a guardiã da areia. Certamente haveria coisas boas no caráter ou alma dela mas seu corpo era mais formoso do que as constelações do céu. A pele dela era morena, mas no tom mais sensual possível de todos. Seus lábios eram um pouco grandes e carnhudos, seu cabelo era negro, escuro e um pouco selvagem. Em cada detalhe do corpo dela havia uma curva ou fresta infinitamente interessante, bonita e sensual desde a sua axila até o seu pescoço. Suas expressões faciais e corporais pareciam aquelas quando se é acometido por sonhos indelicados. Em certas partes do seu corpo havia pelos que certamente instigavam qualquer coisa que estivesse adormecida a despertar, mesmo o maior semi-deus.

Se no final das contas que diferença faz ainda que o sentido da vida fosse o deserto pois nós viemos na poeira e para poeira voltaremos.

Quando finalmente conseguiu escapar da cidade o homem do deserto percebeu que tudo que ali parecia ser uma coisa, na verdade, era outra. Naqueles mausoléus e torres feitas de areia cabiam muitas pessoas, mas todas elas eram vazias por dentro. Poderia se dizer que naquele lugar quanto mais o homem do deserto se aproximasse das coisas, sejam elas pessoas, idéias ou sentimentos, mais elas se transformavam em seu oposto. E só pareciam nobres ou belas quanto mais distante se estivesse delas..

O homem do deserto, a custa de muito, sacrifício e peregrinação, percebeu a dura verdade. Aquilo que lhe parecia ser obvio ou evidente não era obvio ou evidente para ninguém .E nunca seria. Ninguém ali, e em nenhum outro lugar, poderia dizer a verdade que ele tanto buscava. A verdade só poderia ser dita diretamente por Deus ou pela própria natureza.

Naquele lugar todas as palavras que saíssem da boca deles se tornavam uma mentira. Tudo aquilo em que eles tocavam se tornava podre e fétido. Tudo aquilo que eles olhavam era motivo de ódio até mesmo as cores de uma borboleta.

O homem do deserto saiu daquele lugar sem ter nada em suas mãos e bolsos e sem saber o dia de amanhã. Não saberia onde se alimentar ou com que. Mas, quase como um milagre, algo súbito aconteceu.

Enquanto se dirigia a sua tenda ele encontrou um baú cheio de ouro. E, além disso, como completava cerca de 30 anos, recebeu um presente e benção da guardiã da lua e do sol

A guardiã do sol presenteou o homem do deserto com uma loba. A guardiã da lua presenteou o homem do deserto com uma gata. E a guardiã das nuvens lhe presenteou com o sono mais profundo e leve do que teria em qualquer palácio do mundo.

O homem do deserto começou cruzar o em busca de ouvir as histórias de outros povos e tribos, contar seu testemunho e também para fazer comércio e conhecer novas especiarias. Ia agora montado em sua loba, com sua gata e seu baú com ouro.

Logo no inicio da sua viagem ele encontrou um lugar bonito e sereno que era habitado pelo guardião do vento, que também era o guardião da montanha.

Se o homem do deserto tinha quase uma obsessão por aquilo que era justo, certo ou correto, o homem da montanha lhe dizia que a linha que separa o bem do mal é tênue, assim como a linha que separa a justiça da injustiça, a vida da morte. O homem do vento dizia para o homem do deserto que ele não deveria carregar nada de pesado consigo mesmo e deixar o peso de todas as coisas desagradáveis, negativas e injustas que recebeu para aqueles que o causaram. Ele, portanto, deveria carregar consigo apenas o peso dos feixes de luz, da brisa suave do vento e tudo aquilo que coubesse em sua mochila.

Após descer o campo avistava um lugar sombrio e fétido pelo qual era obrigado a passar.

Mais esquisito que o homem do deserto somente é o guardião do pântano. O homem do pântano nunca amou ou foi amado por ninguém. Suas palavras são confunfas e ninguém entende o que sai da sua boca. Sua vista é borrada e ele não entende o que os outros falam. Sua boca e suas mãos são tortas. Ele é um ser entre a vida e a morte que não é uma coisa e nem outra. Não é louco, mas também não é normal. Não é justo e nem injusto, não é bom e nem mal. E a única entidade que tinha coragem de visitar ou se banhar naquele local era a deusa da loucura.

Curiosamente a deusa da loucura não era má. Então o homem do deserto se perguntava se tinha mais valor alguém ser normal, mas completamente destituído de caráter, lealdade e boa vontade, ou um louco que tem bom coração? E naquela situação que parecia não haver saída a deusa da loucura conduziu o homem do deserto até o caminho certo que levava para fora do pântano. O louco acabou sendo mais útil do que os normais.

Somente alguém tão solitário quanto o homem do deserto poderia gosta dele. Ou louco?

A loucura da guardiã da loucura era proporcional

O homem do deserto finalmente percebeu que aquilo que era veneno para os outros era o seu remédio.

Ou talvez eu que esteja totalmente errado esperando coisas das pessoas que elas não tem inclinação para fazer ou tem total liberdade para desobedecer.

E antes de sair da cidade, desejando nunca mais pisas os pés lá novamente, o homem do deserto se fez uma pergunta.

A solidão dele era infinita. Não mais do que a sua fé ou amor pela natureza.

As academias dali serviam para criar mentirosos e não sábios. Aliás

Se o homem do deserto fazia um esforço para ser justo os demais faziam para ser injusto. Parecia que sentiam um grande deleite e alegria em cometerem injustiças.

O descolamento do homem do deserto não era apenas moral mas também estético .

Não existe coisa mais difícil nesse do que amar os inimigos como a si mesmo.

Para desagradar eles não é preciso dizer a verdade, mas basta permanecer em silêncio. Para incomodar eles não é preciso fazer algo. Basta nunca ter feito.

O que mais incomodava o homem do deserto não era a solidão, mas como era tratado e visto pelas demais pessoas que o julgavam com grande certeza e arrogância quanto menos o conheciam. Certamente ele conheceu pessoas nobresnessa vida, mas nenhuma naquele lugar. Com exceção do guardião dos oceanos.

Somente com o guardião do oceano o homem do deserto poderia ter conversas profundas, por exemplo, a respeito do sentido da vida e do que é a felicidade. Para o homem do deserto a vida era algo ao mesmo tempo pequeno, efêmero e de uma beleza infinita. E em sua demasiada humildade, simplicidade e quase ingenuidade, achava que o sentido da vida se resumida em estar vivo. Do guardião do oceano ele ouviu palavras e ensinamentos mais valiosos do que qualquer ouro que daquela cidade.

Apesar de tudo sou grato a Deus não somente por aquilo que ele me deu, mas principalmente por aquilo que ele afastou de mim. Sou grato a Deus principalmente por tudo aquilo que ele não me deu.

O homem do deserto, ingênuo, acreditava que os cidadões daquela cidade prezavam pelo conhecimento, seja o conhecimento proveniente do interior do fundo da alma ou da própria natureza, pois havia muitas bibliotecas e doutores naquele lugar. Mas, não demorou muito tempo até o homem do deserto perceber que as pessoas daquele lugar não só odiavam a verdade e o conhecimento como também odiavam mais ainda qualquer ato de boa vontade, generosidade, justiça ou altruísmo. Naquele lugar havia sim muitos livros, mas nenhum conhecimento. Havia pessoas que decoraram infinitas, mas elas eram todas falsas ou vazias.

Os homens daquele lugar quanto menos sabiam mais certeza e arrogância tinham sobre o que falavam. Quanto mais desprezíveis e miseráveis eram mais se consideram e se julgavam justos, nobres e importantes.

O homem do deserto percebeu que ali não conseguiria convencer ninguém sobre nada e nem mesmo sobre o óbvio. Então percebeu que aquilo que ela veneno para seus conterrâneos era o seu remédio.

O deserto, apesar de aparentemente solitário, guardava e era povoado por muitas entidades. Algumas aterrorizantes enquanto outras demasiadamente prazerosas.

A guardiã das nuvens, por exemplo, permitia que o homem do deserto dormisse de forma mais serena e profunda do que em qualquer palácio da cidade ou do mundo. Mesmo sob um calor escaldante e extremo ela o fazia nada sentir além de uma brisa refrescante.

O homem do deserto já estava resignado em viver a vida toda na pureza. Mas, a guardiã do sol tinha atributos tão abundantes que certamente atiçavam e iluminavam a imaginação do homem do deserto.

A guardiã dos espelhos quando se manifestava raptava e tomava seus sonhos de surpresa o fazendo imaginar as dançarinas mais belas do deserto nuas diante de si, com sua pela morena, escura e com seus volumosos negros.

A jovem do sol dizia que o homem do sol poderia provar sua flor. Mas ele não imaginava que fazendo isso poderia ver o reflexo de cada estrela do universo e das profundeza d sua alma através dos olhos dela. Tocando o corpo dela poderia descobriar o que cada palavra do mundo quer dizer e aquilo que as palavras não podem dizer. Poderia descobrir todos os segredos da natureza e de si mesmo enquanto ela preenchia a sua mente e alma com uma luz infinita e preenchia o seu corpo com um calor infinito.

O homem do deserto, em sua infinita simplicidade e humildade, tinha medo de tocar a guardiã do sol. Tinha medo de machucá-la, de ser inconveniente ou de sujá-la com os resquícios da areia que ainda havia entre seus dedos. Mas para ela tais grãos eram como um tempero apimentado ou sal. Se dando conta da situação ela pediu para que ele deitasse nu na cama de rosas. Ele, abrindo um sorriso tímido e sutil, pensou que tudo aquilo que ela fizesse com o seu corpo seria culpa dela, da mesma forma que alguém sobre em uma arvore para apanhar frutos deliciosos. Ela então segurou as mãos dele e começou a passar pelo próprio corpo o ensinando onde deveria tocar, com que força, com que velocidade e de qual jeito, com a mesma paciência e dedicação que um grande mestre ensina o jovem aprendiz a manusear a cítara.

Existiria coisa mais divina do que ficar pensando nela? Ou imaginando coisas sobre ela?

A guardiã do sol sempre esteve ao mesmo tempo tão perto e tão distante. Ela toca sua pele todos os dias mesmo estando tão distante. Acaricia seus olhos e coração pela manhã. Ela ilumina completamente a sua mente e imaginação.

A mesma sensação que eu tenho olhando para o sol eu tenho olhando para ela. Posso dizer que a mesma importância que o sol tem para as borboletas, abelhas ou para o jardim ela também tem para mim.

O homem do deserto tão tímido, retraído, humilde, quase acovardado, nutria um grande amor pela guardiã do sol. Mas a condição que o universo impôs para que eles conseguissem fazer amor era fazer em um quarto cheio de pequeninos enfeites pendurados em linhas penduradas no teto cujo qual, entre as quatro paredes, diversas pessoas teriam que passar pelas portas e vãos até alcançarem seu destino. Músicos, meretrizes, comerciantes, curiosos, mendigos, viajantes, todos poderiam vê-los nus e cada detalhe do seu corpo

enquanto sons muito curiosos saiam dos enfeitezinhos todas às vezes que alguém esbarrava neles.

O homem do deserto ficou encantando com os jardins e montanhas da guardiã do sol

Seus jardins eram seu cabelo, seus cílios até seus pelos. Suas montanhas eram seus seios, seus lábios e sua pele.

Mas se o homem do deserto tinha fantasias interessantes era somente com a guardiã do sol. Já com a guardiã das nuvens e da lua sua curiosidade era mais interessante e... sutil . Ele não queria tocar elas, mas apenas ver elas nuas ou fazendo amor com outra entidade ou consigo mesmas.

Tal como alguém que ama o pôr-do-sol ou o eclipse ele apenas queria ver elas fazendo amor. Seja com outros ou consigo mesmas.

A guardiã da lua presenteou o homem do deserto com uma gata. A guardiã da sol presenteou o homem do deserto com uma loba. O guardião do oceano o presenteou com a sabedoria e histórias mais valiosas do que ouro.

O homem do deserto passou então a peregrinar pelo infinito deserto montado em sua loba e carregando sua gata preta para contar suas histórias e fazer comércio.

Toda e qualquer sociedade sempre terá seus homens do deserto e guadiãs da lua. O que movem eles não é o ódio pela sociedade, mas o amor pela solidão.

O amor é literalmente uma coisa quente.

O homem do deserto não só conversava diretamente com Deus, mas também com as infinitas entidades que fazem parte desse mundo e que antecederam a existência e a consciência humana, assim como cada detalhe de sua alma e sentimentos. As entidades, diferentemente do deus supremo, tinham um grande desejo de fazer amor com as outras entidades. De ver elas fazendo amor ou completamente nuas ou nus.

O homem do deserto gostava de brincar atribuindo à natureza coisas dos homens. E a natureza gostava de jogar ao homem coisas da natureza.

O conhecimento da sociedade e da linguagem é na verdade a sombra do conhecimento verdadeiro e um conhecimento já morto. O verdadeiro conhecimento é obtido diretamente por Deus e diretamente pelo contato com a natureza.

Os homens daquela cidade, da cidade da mentira, já deveriam ter sidos esquecidos. Mas vale lembrar que a única fé que eles têm é que o ouro e as coisas materiais têm valor intrínseco e em si mesma, como se uma pedrinha de outro ou prata tivesse dentro dela o segredo da felicidade ou do amor. Eles têm tanta fé nas coisas materiais que deixariam os devotos impressionados. E se alguém não quiser se vender ou se curvar pelas suas migalhas? Bom, isso é algo que eles não conseguem conceber ou compreender. E tudo o que eles fazem é em troca de migalhas de ouro até mesmo matar seus semelhantes, irmãos ou a si mesmos. Tentando amenizar ou disfarçar sua mediocridade e mau-gosto eles até proferem algumas

belas palavras... Mas, na prática, sua ações sempre sustentam o contrário do que dizem. Então podemos dizer que os cidadões daquela cidade são aqueles que sempre dizem coisas para fazer o oposto na prática.

Não haveria outra palavra para se referir aos templos da cidade da mentira senão como ridículos. Ora as pessoas vão nesses lugares achando que cairá ouro do céu ou que assumirão o ofício onde se ganhas muito bem, mas que é preciso ser um notável canalha para fazer jus a ele. Então nos perguntamos se esse templo é o reflexo desse povinho ou se esse povinho é o reflexo desse templo maldito? Que sentido há em alguém buscar um templo buscando apenas algo material, como alguém que não se importa se as moedas de ouro estão sujas de sangue ou se sua procedência é da escravidão.

E como todos naquela cidade são ladrões mesquinhos, no final das contas, quem mais se prejudicam são eles mesmos e não as vítimas que roubam. Pois após roubarem e enganarem um ou outro viajante elas acabam tendo que lidar com ladrões iguais, piores ou melhores do que eles. Mas eles sempre têm uma palavra muito bela para amenizar sua mediocridade e má-vontade.

Poder-se-ia dizer que cada coisa que acontece na mente ou na consciência é a ação de uma entidade diferente. O individuo, na verdade, não é dono de nada, não é ninguém, mas um mero invólucro por onde as entidades vão desfilando e por vezes se digladiando. O desejo, o ódio, a frustração, a amizade a serenidade e assim por diante...

Da mesma forma que existe o homem e a mulher existe o sol e a lua. Da mesma forma

Esse mundo é permeado por desejos que nunca são realizados e por ações que mesmo realizadas não tem ou despertam nenhum desejo.

O que é pior, ser picado por uma cobra ou ser a própria cobra que passa a vida inteira rastejando? Ser picado por um inseto ou ser o próprio inseto a ponto de julgar como doce ou mel todo tipo de podridão e chorume que existe nesse mundo?

A cobra sabendo que nunca será uma ave e o verme sabendo que nunca será uma borboleta ou abelha

Podemos dizer que somente os solitários e os loucos poderiam gostar do homem do deserto.

Ah! Mas há tantas curvas na loucura daquela louquinha quanto em seu corpo.

Apesar de tudo isso o homem do deserto não se sentia triste. Afinal de contas é pior ser picado por uma cobra ou ser a própria cobra? É pior ser picado por um inseto ou ser o próprio?

Ele transformava as pequenas lágrimas do homem do deserto em um oceano infinito. Não de tristeza ou insatisfação, mas de serenidade e compreensão.

Sem a escuridão do céu as estrelas não poderiam brilhar. E sem suas sombras ninguém teria onde se esconder ou repousar.

Sem as ondas melancólicas do mar ou da chuva como o oceano poderia absolver ou refletir a luz do céu?

Quanto maior a solidão ou escuridão maior é o brilho que apenas um feixe de luz pode ter.

Uma noite a guardiã da noite presenteou o guardião do deserto com uma gata.

O homem do deserto só sabia de duas coisas. Uma é que a solidão é a pior coisa que pode existir nesse mundo. E a outra é que a solidão é a melhor coisa que pode existir nessa vida.

O homem do deserto só sabia de uma coisa. O quanto a guardiã da lua e do sol transformavam suas pequenas lágrimas em um oceano cheio de cores e de vida. Em um Oasis paradisíaco.

Um belo dia a guardiã sol convidou o guardião do deserto para conhecer seu belo jardim, ainda que apenas em sonho.

O dia está lindo. Não mais que seus olhos.

Nenhuma palavra é mais verdadeira do que seu corpo.

Talvez ela seja para mim aquilo que o Sol é para as abelhas, as rosas e as borboletas.

Há coisas no mundo que se enxergar melhor com os olhos fechados,

Com os olhos completamente fechados...

Sozinho eu não consigo enxergar quem eu sou.

Sozinho eu não consigo saber quem eu sou...

Não preciso que ela me engula ou me devore para que seja alguém. Apenas que ela diga o caminho da minha própria metamorfose.

A única maneira de conhecer quem eu sou é olhando nos olhos dela.

Não importe que eu falhe. Pois parece que o destino de todo vôo é a queda, assim como da vida é a morte.

O que a vida senão a ruptura daquilo que parecia absoluta? Senão o fim do silêncio com a mais doce sinfonia ou mais aterrorizante estrondo?

Eu não sei se a vida é um real despertar ou adomercer.

Mesmo nunca tocando ou vendo ninguém a vida desse homem nunca foi solitária. Pois a guardiã da chuva e a guardiã das nuvens sempre estiveram perto da sua imaginação. Ele sempre quis de maneira sutil olhar elas pela brecha, ou seja, imaginar elas fazendo amor embora nunca participasse. É essa a sensação que ele tem olhando a natureza, espionar os deuses fazendo amor.

O guaridão do deserto sempre esteve ao mesmo tempo tão perto e distante da guardiã do sol. Mesmo estando tão distante o calor dela aquele sua pele e ilumina sua imaginação.

Entre suas inúmeras viagens, o homem do deserto também encontrou a tribo dos homens com cabeça de pedra. Para aqueles homens tudo no mundo era dividido de maneira rígida, o bem e o mal, a justiça e a injustiça, o feio e o bonito, a verdade e a mentira. Esse homens, assim como aqueles da cidade árida, não tinham nenhuma inclinação ou propensão para coisas espirituais ou morais. Mas, pelo menos, os homens cabeça de pedra não tinham a malícia ou o veneno dos cidadãos da cidade seca, mas eram demasiamente simplório em sua visão de mundo e julgamento da realidade. Ao contrário da cidade ária, sua tribo não era permeada de ladrões ou traidores.

O fim sempre é mais belo do que o começo. Não deveria ser motivo de lamentação mas de gratidão porque se as coisas acabaram é porque um dia se tinha elas ou elas existiram.

Sem suas ondas melancólicas o oceano não poderia refletir ou absorver a luz do céu.

Esses eram um dos principais pontos de embate entre o homem do deserto e os sábios da cidade. Os sábios diziam que se alguém não faz más ações então ele é bom. Já o homem do deserto dizia que mesmo alguém que não faz o mal pode continuar sendo mau. Nesses casos o único motivo de não fazer o mal seria a mera impossibilidade de fazê-lo e não qualquer aspecto nobre do caráter. Os sábios consideravam o seu povo nobre porque não feriam ninguém com espadas ou citadas, mas não tinham os materiais ou o conhecimento para fazer tais ferramentas.

Se alguém quisesse ofende-los bastava dizer a verdade. Mas se mentisse também iria ofender. A única maneira de não ofender eles era dizer apenas aquilo que o seu pequeno livro permitia.

Pergunto-me como deixaram o homem do deserto entrar lá e permanecer por tanto tempo mesmo com todas as diferença que existiam de caráter, de princípios e de intenções entre ele o povinho de lá? Em vez de criticar eles, prefiro lançar uma pergunta ardil sobre o homem do deserto. Seria ele o filho de um anjo com um demônio? Seria o filho de uma nuvem com uma serpente, ou de um monstro com um oasis? Afinal de contas, mesmo humilhado, ainda reconhecia a beleza das mulheres daquele local. Até que ponto o desejo está à margem da moralidade ou daquilo que era certo e justo?

Se eu pudesse escrever algo seria com um único propósito. Lembrar de que acima de Deus não há ninguém.

Arthur Silva Sacramento — The man of the desert and the guardian of the moon.

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The greater the solitude and the darkness, the greater the brightness that only a single beam of light can have.

Once upon a time there was the story of a man who lived his whole life isolated in the desert. The man of the desert never knew any other person in his life. Only the guardian of the moon and the guardian of the sun.

The man of the desert, even having never been baptized or read any book, not even the Bible, had a great intuition that God existed and was true. Even though he seemed crude, he had the most important thing: faith.

With rumors of a great storm approaching, he decided to set off for a very distant city, whose towers were nevertheless visible. He believed that spiritual demons were more harmless than material ones, should they exist there.

New Babylon, the great city of the desert, from afar seemed to be the center of the world. After all, nowhere else were there towers as tall as there, even though all of them were made of sand and not of honor. In his immense naivety, the man of the desert believed that the inhabitants of that city would have souls as elevated and as close to heaven as their towers and mausoleums were.

Before the great and apparently indestructible gate, he was certain that if he entered there he could never leave or escape again. Once inside the arid city, what most caught his attention was not the architecture of that place, but its wise men. The wise men of that city wanted not only to castrate and chain all the demons, but also all the angels.

Those wise men deeply hated demons. They just didn't hate them more than they hated angels. In truth, they had a great fondness for everything that was lukewarm and neutral. They cruelly punished both those who were very good and just and those who were evil.

They hated wicked men because they lacked the cunning, the ingenuity, or even the vitality and shamelessness needed to carry out an action, even an evil one. For example, how could someone slander if they were mute? They hated with far greater force and intensity the men who were good and just, for they considered that their peace of mind, serenity, and discernment offered a better remedy than any weed of theirs could offer — one capable even of curing the eyes in a crystalline way, so that they could see with great clarity both the shadows and the light.

Their dirty, deformed eyes placed the blame for everything they saw on the objects themselves and on other people. They were incapable of seeing any flaw or weakness that came from their own soul, their own ignorance, mind, or character. They were excellent at judging others, but incapable of judging themselves.

Because of my solitude they saw me as worse than a bandit or a prostitute. Even though I had never said or done an evil act. Nor even had an evil intention or will.

If the price of drawing closer to God is to distance myself more and more from them, then that is what I will do. What bothers me is not having the contempt of many, but having the support of no one. But if God is by my side, I will need nothing else but Him.

Those wise men, who considered themselves perfect and untouchable, most of whom refused to speak with anyone from another culture, empire, religion, or even from outside, began doing against me the thing they knew best: gossip and slander. They began to judge me not by my actions or by who I was, but according to the opinion of third parties, and without ever asking me anything.

They said among themselves, *How can a man who does not believe in our god speak of justice and injustice? How can a man who does not believe in god know what is right and what is wrong?*

The wise men of that city declared him a heretic. They said: *What do you mean? Do you wish to prove the existence of God through nature or through direct contact? Worse still, do you dare say that in a woman's body, just as in a beam of light or an ocean wave, lies the secret to reaching both paradise and hell?*

They said with an air of superiority, *How can a man who claims to have the spirituality of a cloud also have a desire as carnal and hot as the sand of the desert?*

Already tired of their pettiness and half-truths, I began to speak only what was in my heart. No more and no less. Without worrying whether it might deeply offend them or even shock them.

Ah! Guardian of the sun... The only woman I have ever fallen in love with in this life.

I can see the reflection of every divine star looking into her eyes.

Looking into her eyes I can see not only the depths of my own soul, but also every corner of this sublime and perfect universe.

If God is my ground — that is, the foundation that would not let me fall — I could say that she is my garden.

The joy and will to live that she gives me is as great as that of God or of the sun.

Her eyes are as beautiful as the light of the sun.

Only a miracle could bring a girl close to someone as solitary as I am.

And what if, by some great irony, madness, or crooked line of this world...

Touching her, would I be closer to God than touching the chairs of your dirty and corrupted temples?

And what if, seeing her naked, I were closer to paradise than inside your rotten, filthy, and lying temples?

And what if she brought me closer to God than all the words you could say?

And what if the prostitute, even with all her flaws, were still purer and nobler than any of your priests?

If there is something in this world capable of giving me the will to live, why could I not consider it sacred or divine? Why could I not consider that it brings me closer to God?

When everything is dark I know that God, or she, can light my way. But not you.

Since that day, when I said these things, they never spoke to me again. They began to look at me sideways, with faces of disgust and contempt. They never again invited me to their dinners and banquets, but the truth is that even with all their meat, wine, and gold, I never felt happy among them. They threw me into the gutter with nothing. But so far God has provided. And He will provide.

I would rather eat simple, humble food beside someone who understands me than eat a banquet or luxurious food beside someone who does not understand me. I prefer the company of those whose mere presence is enough to fill my emptiness over the company of those who try to buy me with gold and crumbs.

From that day on they began to look at me with more hatred than the devil looked at Jesus Christ. They began to do everything to bring me down. But so far they have not succeeded. So far the powerful and the superior, the untouchable and indestructible, have not managed to defeat something that is everywhere and nowhere: the feeling of deep solitude. They try, they try, they try to bring me down in every imaginable way, but so far they still have not managed to bring me down. And I wonder why they cannot bring me down, even though I am apparently weaker and more vulnerable than they are.

Could it be that in trying to attack and humiliate me, they are only trying to wound their own eyes and their own shadow? I finally decided to distance myself from them, from all of them, for anything I said they would consider madness or an affront, even if that was not my intention. But how can anyone flee from their own shadow?

For a plant to grow healthy, it seems it needs a little light and a little shade.

The devil's advocate and the serpent said that their situation should be softened. After all, in that city each generation became worse and more miserable than the one before. Just or unjust, they were carrying a real burden: living in a decadent society. It was not advantageous there for anyone to be honest or upright. The only way to relieve their suffering and nausea, their only psychological shield, was to believe that mediocrity was a good thing — since they could not escape it, nor would they be rewarded for anything good or overly bad that they did. Even the most foolish and naive among them perceived the malice of that place. Only those who were like them, or mad, remained there. Those who had nothing left to gain or lose.

They insisted, saying: Is there really nothing there that compensates for your lies? Not even the beauty of your women or the shine of your false jewels?

How could those men look at the world in such an evil way and curse their own lives so much, when they themselves had built that world? How could they play the victim or the wretch when they themselves had made and created their own laws, rules, and truths, carving every detail of that world in their own image and likeness?

I leave them to amuse themselves among themselves. Now I want to be not only outside the margins of that city, but also outside the margins of every word they say and invent. Whatever they try to include me in or say about me, I want to remain outside the margins of their judgments and their truths.

It took me a long time to notice the subtlety of things. Everything in that city was motivated by ill will and envy. If they memorized the Bible, it was out of ill intent. If they invented justice or something apparently good, it was with ill intent. And even if they gave bread, it was out of ill intent or vanity. There, nothing was what it seemed. There, everything was one great illusion.

One should never underestimate how much a slave can love his own chains.

The man of the desert learned a hard lesson that he resisted his whole life. Now he had to carry a sword, a scimitar. Even so, he had to keep it always sharp, even if he never had to use it. That people then began to judge him as a criminal or a bandit, even though he used the sword only to defend himself. And even so, he never had to use it.

Of all the people who lived in that city, perhaps millions or countless, only the guardian of the oceans and the guardian of the moon managed to see the soul of the man of the desert and how he truly was, putting an end to his infinite solitude.

That people hated truth as much as lies. They hated good as much as evil. They hated wealth as much as poverty. The only thing they loved was mediocrity!

Contrary to what they think, solitude never bothered me — only their judgment did.

They see only what they want to see or invent. Give them paradise and they will see hell. Give them hell and they will see paradise.

Those wise men deeply hated prostitution. They just didn't hate it more than they hated solitude. They hated a solitary man far more than a prostitute. Solitude by itself never bothered me; what bothered me were their judgments.

Those wise men had great difficulty telling good from evil. If they could not tell good from evil, neither could they see the nuances, the details, and the gradients between one thing and another. The context and circumstances that might make a letter or a word unjust were unthinkable to them. Even so, they considered themselves perfect and untouchable. What would they think if they had to do something absurd at God's command to prove their faith, such as sacrificing their own son upon a great rock, with the only guarantee being that *God will provide*?

If they were sick or fallen, that was also how they saw the world. They sought wealth and prosperity by destroying the things of others, whether material or spiritual, instead of building something for themselves. And so they created a society where all absolute truths and laws are self-destructive, or at best, hypocritical.

That man's goodness was never recognized. As if it were a currency like gold, but one offered by a merchant who refuses to be paid, out of pure ignorance or vanity.

Thinking only of themselves brought about social ruin. For no one trusted the coin or the goods they received anymore, fearing they had been tampered with. On one hand, the lords were suspicious that servants and scribes would rob and betray them; on the other, those scribes and servants were so lazy they would rather die than work or earn so little. Because of the distrust and misery accumulated in that place — not only material but above all spiritual — commerce was slowly dying, along with all its history, its currency, and its promise of any future dignity or prosperity. Because of the laziness and detachment, those lords had fewer and fewer people to exploit and mistreat. It was notable that in New Babylon, fewer and fewer people were having children, and it was only a matter of time before that people or civilization vanished or disappeared completely.

What great feat could one expect from a lukewarm people or civilization? None. Who would be the great hero of that people, however cruel a murderer or however pure a saint he might be? In truth, that people never had a single hero. Nor would there even be any ruin of their city, for everything they built was made only of sand — cheap, abundant material, just like their souls. That people never made a single scientific, astronomical, or philosophical discovery. Not even a poetic one. What one could expect was a sickly hypocrisy, in which the emptier words were, the more valuable and true they seemed.

A serpent whispered in the ear of the man of the desert, asking whether there was truly no compensation for so much decadence — not even the beauty of those women? What would the man of the desert think or feel if a Pharisee woman called him by his name?

And the snake kept whispering, agitated. What if that dark tone were the most beautiful and irresistible a skin could have? What if that body the man had never touched hid mysteries greater than the city itself — a shortcut leading to both paradise and hell? A shortcut that shrank the distance between paradise and hell, bringing them so close together, separated by a distance smaller than the eye of a needle.

The man of the desert never had the pretension of being a caricature imitation of Jesus. For when he tried to be clever, it was hard for even the angels or demons themselves to understand him. Especially since he had only heard of the Bible or of Jesus when he was already quite old, past thirty or forty years. Although he was born and lived alone in the desert his entire life, without reading a single book, he always had an intuition that God existed.

The great miracle would not be becoming the richest man, or having all those women. It was driving away all that solitude even while remaining alone. There would be no greater miracle in this world than someone truly capable of taking that man's solitude away.

That solitude, even though it seemed so deep or absolute, needed something infinitely smaller than a kiss to be destroyed. It needed only for someone to be able to see his soul as it truly was.

Even without having met him or heard of him, the man of the desert would feel happy if he could set foot on the same ground Jesus once walked. If he had the privilege of looking up at the same sky Jesus Christ once looked at.

In the end, what is spirituality? What if, in this mad world, that woman served to bring him closer to God?

What if even the song of the birds served to bring him closer to God? Just like the cadence of every star or cloud.

How could anyone prove that God, religion, or spirituality do not exist, if the mere goodwill or faith of one individual is enough for them to exist? A part of God exists in all of us. If no one denies the existence of happiness or sadness, there would be no sense in denying faith or something spiritual, for — if one could explain it crudely — such things first materialize inside the subject and are only afterward made outward, though nothing proves the opposite. Proof of this lies in the difference of interpretation that someone with discernment and someone without it can have of the very same scripture. How the same word can touch...

It is not merely a question of faith or self-knowledge, but of discovering the archetypes. Every desert and cloud that exists in the human mind. Every monster and oasis hidden in the depths of consciousness, of the mind, of the soul, of thought and of feeling.

And since those times, what would be the archetypes that have always existed and will always exist as long as humanity endures?

In the end, was all that man's solitude in vain? Just like every time he marveled, looking at the stars of the sky through the reflection in her eyes?

Only someone very naive could believe he could save that place or transform it for the better. Even the man of the desert, the simplest and most naive of men, knew this. The best thing that anyone unlucky enough to have been born in New Babylon, and who was never corrupted, could do was to flee that place as soon as possible.

For those men, what mattered was the material. What mattered was the number of women someone could accumulate, not the love one might feel for just one. What mattered was the size of the towers or palaces they could build, not their unbearable stench and heat. Those men were only capable of seeing the quantity of things, never their quality.

And so it was also in their temples and academies, among such "men of quantity." Well, if a temple is packed, it must be because there is true faith and noble teachings there! Well, if most people believe something, then it becomes true — an absolute, unquestionable truth.

In those temples, men and women went to scream, trying to expel the demons from their own minds or bodies. But, in truth, there never was and never has been any demon. Because they themselves were the demons.

For them, crumbs of gold were worth more than any moral, physical, or spiritual quality. So much so that every crime in that place was bailable. And even paradise had a price that could be paid in gold.

They were unable to see the difference between day and night, and the nuance between one and the other. Totally uninterested and too lazy to tell light from shadow, the fly from the bee,

the wheat from the chaff, water from wine, and bloody bones from fish flesh. They had a great fondness for lukewarm, neutral things.

I was never accepted into their temple, simply for living alone and being solitary. And yet, there is nothing more beautiful in this life than a group of people truly wishing to reach God.

Their refuge was merely the will of the majority. And it never entered my mind that I could be judged according to the opinion of others rather than by what I am or what I have done.

The less they knew of things, the more certainty and arrogance they had in their judgments. They refused to speak or exchange teachings with anyone from another culture, or with even a slightly different intellectual or spiritual leaning. They held great contempt not only for truth, but for everything involving character and dignity. The more wretched and unjust they were, the nobler and superior they considered themselves.

The man of the desert never had the vanity or the pretension of being a caricature imitation of Jesus, but he would feel happy if he could set his feet upon, or look up at, the same sky He once looked at.

How can someone who can only see the quantity of things, and never their quality, measure or gauge faith, character, or goodwill...

If those men were only capable of seeing the quantity of things and never their quality, how could they measure or gauge someone's character, faith, or courage? Or even madness or desire? If on one hand...

Men and women went to those temples to scream, trying to drive out the demons that existed in their minds, souls, or bodies. But, in truth, there never was and never will be a demon. Because they themselves were the demons.

Truth, for them, was not something logical or rational, but simply whatever the majority believed. And so it was with the value of things too. What few wanted had little value. What many wanted had great value. If no one wanted something, it was almost certainly something contemptible.

Never had the man of the desert felt so much solitude as when he was in the city, surrounded by people — even though he was born and lived his entire life in the desert.

Thus, since everyone there had ill will, they judged coal as something bad in itself, since no one would ever polish it into a diamond. They judged marble and clay just as contemptibly, since all of them had crooked hands, and nothing beautiful could ever come from wherever they touched or looked.

And even with all these contradictions, deformities, and imperfections, I doubt there exists any people in the desert who take more pride in speaking of God than they do!

But would that whole crowd, together, have more faith, character, or dignity than the man of the desert alone? Together, would they have more melancholy and shadow than the guardian of the moon? Would they have the serenity and discernment of the guardian of the ocean?

Forgiveness had a price that could be paid in installments. Paid in the form of barter, or with prostitutes.

In that city it was an affront to want to have a wing, whether of an angel or of a demon. Just as it was to have the habit of diving very deep into the ocean, or of climbing high up mountains.

Only someone very naive could believe he would change that place or turn it into something better.

If I called them demons instead of human beings, I would risk being insensitive in my judgments. But if I called them human beings, I would be unfair to that group or category, since those inhabitants had no humanity, integrity, or dignity whatsoever.

Those wise men not only had great difficulty and disinterest in telling good from evil, light from shadow. They also had trouble telling flies from bees, water from wine, bloody bones from filet of fish. They were absolutely certain that they were perfect. So it was common for them to place the blame of their own deformed souls and eyes onto everything they looked at.

All that mediocrity, all that pettiness, all that negativity caused a discomfort and a nausea in the man of the desert that is hard to describe. In the city, among people, he felt a solitude greater than any he had ever felt in the desert, even though he had been born and had lived his whole life there.

I need to have faith. I need to have courage. To do everything within my reach and leave the rest in God's hands. All I need is for the Holy Spirit to be near me.

I know all this may sound foolish. But if the calling were real, what would it cost me to draw closer to God?

And even if my destiny were to live my entire life in the desert, would I judge that a trial or a blessing? Would I judge it a deliverance, a curse, or a miracle? What I mean is: what if all the filth in my eyes and heart vanished, to the point that I could see how crystalline the water truly is, how pure and beautiful the sky and the clouds truly are, and how lucid the light truly is?

I know that, however abandoned I may seem, God will always send an angel to protect me.

I asked God to send me a sign. Or for a spirit to manifest itself, or send me a sign, if such things truly exist. Then the lights in my room began to flicker in a way that had never happened before, and I felt a great chill through my whole body. After that I went for a walk, and on my way back home I saw the sun on the horizon, so large, so bright, and so beautiful as I had never seen it before in my life.

Would the great miracle be to become rich? Would it be to have the most beautiful woman in the world? I only wanted Him to take away all that solitude — and He did.

What is the most beautiful thing that exists in the world? The reflection of the stars in her eyes? Or the reflection of the depths of my own soul in her eyes?

Everything there made one believe it was the refuge of angels and of the wise. Their promises of salvation and prosperity, as if by magic, made all of it independent of the subject's own

character or actions. Well, well! They discovered or invented a way, a shortcut, to reach paradise even while being the most vile, wretched, and cruel person who ever existed in this world!

But if the man of the desert had one flaw, it was his infinite naivety and simplicity. His humility was so great that even in hell, even before the greatest executioner, he would refuse to complain, or would fear making wrong judgments about others.

The wise men of that city did not believe in the existence of the spiritual world. Even so, I would not feel ashamed to be their opposite, or to think the opposite of them. Perhaps it was because of this divergence of principles that I was never well accepted there. Even if I had every coherent argument and the best intention in the world, no one there would listen to me or hear me.

The wise men of that city wanted to create a being that was lukewarm — that is, one that was neither just nor unjust, neither too good nor too evil. That is why they made no great effort to distinguish good from evil, or light from darkness. The wise men of that city wanted to chain both angels and demons, depriving them of every feeling, desire, and impulse.

The wise men of that city held great fondness for everything that had no heart and was lukewarm. They took pride in this, calling it their absolute truth. But would there not, in the eyes of another, be a double shame in that? Both in believing in absolute truths and in...

The great truth is that from an early age they raised their children to be a kind of amorphous and repulsive being. A being so narrow-minded and alienated that it would be incapable of feeling love or hatred for anything, incapable of feeling desire or disgust for anything. Its worth would not lie in what it was, but only in what it had. A man's worth would come down to the crumbs of gold he carried. And even his body would be neglected, along with his mind and his soul, because his crumbs of gold would matter more than his heart or even his own life.

What would drive someone to have such an inclination toward everything lukewarm and neutral? There, they were not content with killing and castrating all the demons, but also all the angels. Anything even slightly different from themselves, they already regarded with suspicion.

Could it be envy, or fear, of everything a truly good or truly evil man is capable of doing? Why does the hatred of these supposed wise men not aim only at what is very good or very evil, but at any excess of goodness or wickedness at all?

Oh! But no one doubted those absolute truths. Everything was already so corrupted, disfigured, and twisted that no one knew anymore what was truth or lie. What was left to corrupt — or was already corrupted.

For if I had to bet, I would rather believe that only the spiritual world exists, while the material world is an illusion.

But how could the material world not exist? Only a madman could claim that, or someone who feeds on stones. Then what would explain why someone's sadness grows as their wealth

grows, while someone else feels joyful even with nothing, or with so little? Yes, we have plenty of evidence of how wealth affects the soul, and of how the soul affects wealth — but we, or this civilization, have always favored one side of the story, or one interpretation, over the other.

The intention of the wise men of that city was to create a form of knowledge that would weaken the souls of both angels and demons alike.

He decided to go to that city even knowing that he could never leave or escape from it. He believed that the solitude he would feel among people would be less than that of the desert, and he believed that spiritual demons would be more harmless than material ones.

The laws of New Babylon, its customs and absolute truths, originated from a decadent and wretched people, already quite distant from God and almost forgotten by Him. This could be seen even in their proverbs, and in the supposed wisdom of the most learned men and women of that place. They would say things more or less like "Hell is full of good intentions," and from that premise, or principle, they built all the rest. Now, it is true that even a good or just man can still commit injustices, for only God is perfect. Yet they believed so faithfully in their own ideas that they expected a great harvest even without planting anything. They believed that by offering hatred they would receive love, that by offering slander they would receive praise. Stabbing someone, they thought they would be received with an embrace. They believed that committing injustices made them better or superior to everyone else.

Everything that people touched rotted. Everything they looked at withered. Everything they said became a lie. Even when they spoke of God, their words became false. For they spoke what was true in a tone of mockery, irony, or sarcasm.

It took me a long time to realize that those people had no commitment to truth, character, or prosperity. Their only interest was in humiliating others, even if they gained nothing from it.

That city needed neither enemies nor wars to be destroyed — only its own people. The women there no longer had children, or no longer wanted them. The men there ordered the women to abort. They abandoned their own offspring in the desert so as not to spend more gold caring for their children. Others, obsessed with memorizing fallacies and climbing the social hierarchy, found that more amusing or interesting than having children. It was contradictory that, even with all their prostitution and vulgarity, the population of that place never stopped falling.

Sometimes the greatest evil of all lies precisely in the things that seem most normal or harmless. While good hides in what has an extremely monstrous or mad appearance.

The palace that touched the sky turned into ruins, but its shadow remained in our eyes for a long time — whether because our eyes were too naive or too greedy. We could still feel a bit of its cool shadow, even though the wall, the pillar, and the concrete had long since disappeared. It took me a long time to realize, like a wretch living in paradise or a fool living in hell, that no worthy man or just woman stayed there for long.

The superiority and nobility of that people existed only in their own imagination and in their own eyes. They were very good at judging the madness of others, but not their own.

Much later, the man of the desert realized that in that city, all the men and women of good will refused to live there or even set foot in it. None of the few worthy people the man of the desert came to know remained until the city's ruin — only he did. If he had feared the demon outside the city, he ended up having to face one far worse, one that wore the appearance of harmlessness, even of a victim. The man of the desert's greatest flaw was his excessive simplicity and naivety, thinking that everything was good or tolerable, thinking that all that glitters is gold. He would find, or invent, some advantage or positive point even if he were living in hell. The grandeur of the city was nothing more than a great mirage or illusion to attract the most foolish, wretched, desperate, and unwary, for the interior of its inhabitants was more desert-like and arid than the desert itself.

That man's solitude was infinite. But it was never greater than his faith, or his love for nature.

New Babylon would change no one's life. It would only destroy it. It would destroy with the promise of a paradise that lies in crumbs of gold and not in the heart or in goodwill. It would destroy with the promise of a salvation that could only be reached by murdering all the saints, and God.

The energy of that place was so negative that no one stayed there more than a single night — like the guardian of the night. The guardian of the night, like an eclipse, showed herself to the man of the desert only once. But that single night was never forgotten by him, in a very deep and positive way. It is curious that someone one has known for only a single night or day can be more important than a crowd of people one has lived alongside for an entire eternity. As for the guardian of the ocean, he seemed to have been an angel sent by God to help the man of the desert through his hardest and most solitary torments, offering him knowledge more valuable than gold or wheat, and an abundance of serenity in a place where there was not even a drop of water — only despair.

The man of the desert was never well regarded by the inhabitants of the desert city. His feelings, character, or intentions were never taken into account. In that place, only those with more jewels, or who had memorized the greatest number of fallacies, had any worth. One could even say that the greater the man of the desert's goodwill, the greater the contempt, hostility, and distrust with which he was treated by the others. A serpent whispered in his ear, saying it was the custom of that place that the more unjust people were, the more they claimed to be victims.

In that city there was a very dangerous murderer. But how could anyone capture him, if he hides in every shadow and every crack? If he can hide behind every dream, every mirage, or even behind silence and forgetfulness?

How could anyone defeat him, when the more he is humiliated, the stronger he returns? When the more he is despised, the more independent he becomes? When the more silence he receives, the louder his own acts speak or scream for themselves? When the more he is trampled, the more solid he becomes, as though he were the very ground itself? When the

more they try to imprison him, the more children he brings into this world, carrying on his dynasty?

The great thief became the king of New Babylon. The great murderer became the saint and the hero of New Babylon. That man was remembered by every subject and scribe until the disappearance of that civilization.

But no one is greater than God.

But no one is greater than time.

I see that time is my best ally. I see that time is my only avenger. For everything came from dust, and to dust it shall return.

How many foolish individuals exist in the world — or who enjoy being deceived — believing that someone's worth lies merely in having come from a certain place, or having frequented a certain city? And carrying with them countless scrolls and useless papers that are worth nothing anywhere in the world.

For a man without a soul, gold is worth a great deal. For a man with a soul of gold, even the smallest things can have value.

What good is it to have much gold, but no desire to spend it, nowhere to spend it, or never being satisfied with whatever one does spend?

Why would anyone set foot there if the city did not offer so many promises, advantages, and crumbs? If it did not offer a salvation that in truth becomes self-destruction? If it did not seem to be the center of the world, if its people did not seem to be the great victim, or the last grain of the desert, if so many travelers were not blinded by their own misery, cunning, or naivety? What would become of that city if not a single traveler ever felt bored and empty, considering he had nothing left to lose but his dignity? For they did not even offer the gold they promised!

Solitude is, in fact, a bad thing. But living among those people was more solitary than the desert itself. Which is better, if inevitable — a drop, or a whole bottle, of poison?

It took me roughly thirty years, living in that city, to convince myself that their poison is my medicine, and vice versa.

The desert city is a great mirage that deceives even the cleverest. Its shadow, which seems refreshing and the fruit of something truly grand, is in truth the fruit of ruin, and it is only a matter of time before that very shadow disappears.

Good, in order to fight evil, needs no rewards.

Good, in order to fight evil, needs no applause or promises.

And what if God wanted to take revenge on a people who no longer have the slightest trace of loyalty or dignity — so corrupted that they no longer know what is truth and what is lie, no longer know what is corrupted or what has already corrupted itself — gradually raising the heat to an unbearable point, until, somewhere else, a new people arose, one that was not

corrupted, fallen, or sick from its very origin or beginning, as this one was? A people free of all the material flaws and inherent spiritual afflictions of the people of New Babylon?

How can I uncover what is hidden in my mind or soul? Like my imagination of the desert, or of her, completely naked. The reflection of every star in her eyes when I look at her.

Sometimes the miracle, or the trial, depends only on which river's water one chooses to drink. Everything is, and always has been, before our eyes. But the great question is whether we want to open our eyes to see it, or not. All mysteries cease to be mysteries. And all problems are solved. Completely dissolved. Completely forgotten.

The laws, the religion, and the customs of that place originated from a people who were utterly wretched, feeble, and decadent — not from a noble or ambitious people. Thus, every detail and crevice that existed there, whether material, spiritual, or intellectual, was thoroughly corrupted and infested with insects. The law, the religion, the absolute truths, and even the language of that place were steeped and soaked in a spirit that was small-minded and mean, incapable of seeing or considering anything good that might exist in this world.

That people repaid love with hatred, and goodwill with ill will. There was nothing in the world they hated more than truth, or someone of character. The less they knew or understood something, the more arrogance and certainty they had in their judgments. The more unjust and wretched they were, the nobler or more victimized they considered themselves.

Was what God was doing a trial, or a strengthening? Was what God was doing a punishment, or a blessing difficult to understand?

And even though they were uncertain about tomorrow, they drew on a courage and faith that would be the only things capable of preventing...

The man of the desert, in his immense simplicity, entered the city even knowing he could never leave it. And we do not know for certain why — whether to flee a great desert storm, or a trial.

Most of the enemies of the man of the desert are foolish. For they believe that by defeating him they will be annihilating their own shadows, or blinding their own eyes.

The man of the desert is the very shadow and the very eyes of all those who try to persecute or humiliate him.

During his long journey, the man of the desert did not spend forty days in the desert, but an entire eternity. The man of the desert never had a single friend. Only the guardian of the ocean.

If his intention was to flee a physical or material demon, he ended up facing one infinitely greater. But it was a spiritual demon, an invisible and silent demon. A demon that did not stab him with knives, but with contempt, with indifference.

He wondered whether the fault was his own, or others'. After all, everyone there said that solitude was a bad thing. And it was not uncommon for the people of that place to consider

the dirt in their own eyes as though it existed in the things themselves. That is, it was common for them to judge gold or wheat as rotten, when in truth the filth lay entirely in their own filthy, sick eyes.

He thought that there he would find all the answers to his spiritual and material questions. But he was completely mistaken.

That city was infinitely wretched — not only spiritually, but economically. It was customary for parents to have to choose between sacrificing their wife or their offspring for lack of food. But, contradictorily, no one there wanted to work or plant, even to satisfy their own hunger. They kept lamenting, always blaming those who bore no fault. The inhabitants of the desert, or sand, city had the strange habit or taste of desiring only what was stolen or taken from others — even if it was their dignity or self-esteem.

They took pride in their great palaces and mausoleums made of sand. But what good is it to build grand, tall, or seemingly golden things, if everyone inside them has an empty heart?

The main flaw of the men and women of the desert city is believing that the more well-intentioned an individual is, the greater the threat he represents. Indeed, hell is full of good intentions. But if there were no good intention or goodwill at all in this world, what would be left of it? After all, does anyone truly believe an abundant tree can grow from poison or rot? They only want to reap much and be prosperous without doing or planting anything, and the men and women of that place take an inexplicable delight in harming others, even when they come out worse off than their victims.

The man of the desert, at times, in an excess of humility that bordered on a vice, refused to point out what was right or wrong, for fear of judging people in a way that was not absolute or perfectly true. Out of fear, or reluctance, to bother others, even when he was right, or held even a grain of reason. Yet it was well known that the more wretched that people were, the nobler they considered themselves. The less they knew, the more certain they were in their judgments. The more injustices they committed, the more just or victimized they considered themselves, and so on. The less someone depended on them, the more they treated that person with contempt and humiliation.

It did not take long for the man of the desert to realize that in that great city — which seemed to be the center of the world and the redeemer of all noble truths, of the stars and of justice, where everything seemed full, grand, or golden — in truth there was nothing. There were many books, many words, but no knowledge, only fallacies. There were many beautiful words and speeches about "ethics," "justice," "dignity," but in practice no one there had the moral standing to judge anyone. And whoever refused to bring children into that wretched, decadent place was seen and humiliated far worse than a thief or a murderer.

The greatest scribes of that place stood out for their complicated use of language. But behind their words there was nothing. What mattered was not that a person possessed knowledge, but that they used it as a tool to climb the social pyramid. And so the children of that place, from an early age, studied a great deal, countless hours, but the more they read, the less they learned. Those words were empty of meaning, and behind them lay only the cunning of

obtaining the scroll that attested to the great number of fallacies, or figures, a person had managed to memorize. But if he were dropped in the middle of the jungle, the desert, or even another city, he would find no use for anything he had been forced to learn.

The man of the desert, in search of a remedy or an anesthetic for his solitude, walked through every hole, every alley, every sewer, and every foul-smelling corner of that place, but he realized that that city and its citizens offered more solitude than living an entire eternity in the desert. Nothing pleased them more than excluding others, even though they had nothing useful to offer.

The man of the desert's main mistake was to have sought truth, or something noble, in a nest of snakes. But how could he have known that, having been born there? He had always lived surrounded by serpents, but he never saw or recognized himself as one.

It seems that whatever feeds them is something very bad. And they are so preoccupied with feeding that bad, negative feeling that they end up forgetting to care for their own home, their own altar, and the harvest of the city, as well as any garden, or even their own nourishment. So it would not be an exaggeration to say that the people of that place, besides their moral and spiritual flaws, were also literally, and excessively, weak and ugly.

To make up for their weakness and ugliness, they believed that committing injustices would make them strong.

Certainly the man of the desert's greatest flaw was that he never started a conversation. Silence, for him, seemed more of an ally than an enemy. This trait of character, or of spirit, made others see him as an outlaw, a thief, or someone deeply contemptible and undesirable. How could he persuade or deceive people in order to plunder their gold, or seduce women without even loving them? In that city, a man's worth was measured by the amount of gold and the number of women he had. They gave no consideration to whether the gold had been stolen, or was stained with blood, nor whether those women had a monstrous appearance, as much in character as in odor.

For the worshippers of the god of lies, the man of the desert was the most contemptible and repugnant being who had ever set foot on that land or crossed the desert. Yet, in practice, he never stole, lied, attacked, or criticized anyone. Even his slightly impure feelings, he kept to himself.

Because the man of the desert did not have the finest appearance or rhetoric, all his other qualities were disregarded. His words carried no weight for others, since he wore no fine garments and no beautiful jewels. Any possibility of prospering, or taking up a better position in that society, was boycotted, effectively preventing him from surviving there. For the people of that place, everything came down to having a good appearance and good rhetoric. Things like "justice," "truth," "faith," "character," "honesty," "dignity," "honor," or "integrity" were entirely foreign concepts to the people of that place.

That city was so wretched, both morally and economically, that no one was there to take him seriously or give any weight to his words. His arguments or lessons seemed like trying to

convince flies, pigs, and vultures not to eat carrion. That place was so arid that no plant or fruit ever grew there.

The temples of that place were the most horrifying places he had seen before crossing the desert. After all, people went to the temple with the faith that gold would rain from the sky, not with any moral, intellectual, or spiritual purpose. They wanted to earn gold not by the sweat of their own labor or by shaping themselves, but by begging a God about whom they wanted to know nothing at all. They went to the temples hoping to magically become rich, not to do good or to learn how to act with justice or dignity. They went to the temples nurturing the hope of a miracle that would let them rise to the highest posts of that society — posts that only the greatest of cowards and scoundrels would be fit to hold. The temples of that place, despite being packed, were the complete negation of God — whoever He might be — and a distortion of spirituality. There was great faith there in something that is the opposite of faith. A faith that served not to illuminate the world, but to darken it. But for the men and women of that place, truth was only what the majority believed or said, even if the whole flock was walking toward the abyss. So, for that wretched people, being able to say the word "god" was a refuge and a compensation for all their rot.

At the temple they went to scream. Men and women screamed, trying to expel the demons from their souls and consciences. But, in truth, there never was, and never will be, any demon. Because they themselves were the demons.

The man of the desert searched every alley of that city for someone who would tell him the truth he had always needed. The man of the desert searched every sewer of that decadent city for a refuge for his solitude. A remedy for his solitude. He searched for a salvation, or a remedy, that no one in the world could give him. But he realized, at the cost of an ocean of tears, that no one in the world could see his heart or understand his ideas and intentions. Only God, and nature itself, could understand him.

The man of the desert had the chance to raise his head once more, only to gaze upon the infinite beauty of the sky and the sun.

I carry with me no hatred, contempt, or hostility — I leave that weight solely to them. In truth, I carry nothing with me but the wind itself, and the fleeting lights of morning.

The main characteristic of the man of the desert is how much he hates injustice. He prizes justice above all else in this world, even above gold or glory. That seems to be at the very center of his personality, his existence, or his conduct. But the man of the desert sometimes wonders how many things exist in this world that are neither just nor unjust. For example, is it just or unjust to imagine the guardian of the sun completely naked, her golden skin? Is it moral or immoral? For in practice he is carrying out no action, touching no one, not even saying anything. He is only dreaming. Or hallucinating. He is betraying no one, either in his imagination or in his intentions, for he has always lived alone. He wonders whether there are things in this world that may be unjust, or neither just nor unjust, but that could serve as a currency or compensation for something just, such as incense, silk, or opium.

The man of the desert, despite his great goodwill and love of justice, always had very strange dreams. Not infrequently he imagined himself making love to the guardian of the sun when the heat of the desert grew scorching. But his truly strange and recurring dreams were of an excessively fat, smiling male entity who fed on eating women. These women were kept inside jars of fruit jam or honey, asleep. The entity would then place these women on a spoon, as though each one were the size of a grain of rice or wheat. The closer the entity brought that spoon to its mouth, the more the women's desire and heat grew, to the point that they would begin to masturbate and kiss one another. The great climax, or orgasm, came when he literally chewed, crushed, and swallowed them all, inevitably killing them in the end.

Another strange and recurring dream of the man of the desert was being lost in endless alleys and side streets while everyone around him remained indifferent. And the only way to save himself was by breaking in and jumping over the walls of certain houses.

The man of the desert's relationship with the guardian of the moon was also very curious. He had no desire to touch her, only the curiosity to see her naked. He did not want to kiss her, only to watch her making love — with others, or with herself.

In his deepest dreams and illusions, the man of the desert's only wish was for the differences between the sky and the ocean to become very small. Or to become practically none at all. That every beautiful flight, like that of a butterfly, be followed by an inevitable fall, and vice versa. That the difference between love and loneliness be something as subtle as the difference between good and evil. Between truth and lies, between being the guilty one or the victim.

In every drop of the ocean there could be an infinity greater than the ocean itself.

In every beam of light there could be something more brilliant and dazzling than the sun itself.

Her kiss could wound my heart more than if someone drove a dagger into it.

Some star would still shine in the sky, even if all else were forgotten.

The man of the desert had the intuition that within his mind, soul, or consciousness there existed many monsters, entities, and places, as well as remnants and ruins, which he never chose to have or to carry with him.

Such places and entities, like a mirage or an illusion —

These entities, curiously, were organs or cells of other entities, and so on, successively and infinitely.

Basically, every entity had some kind of sexual desire or imagining, except for the supreme god.

Could it be possible for someone to be very just in certain things and very unjust in others? Like someone who sometimes loves and other times strikes, who sometimes gives and other times steals. Could it be possible for someone to be good in some things and evil in others? Like someone who loves one person deeply and mistreats another. Could it be that someone

can do infinite good or evil things, and how could we judge them? Is it just, or unjust? What would the measure of justice be, if it were not a single act, but infinite ones?

Is her golden skin a compensation for any injustice she might commit? Are her full lips a fair compensation for any lie or wrong word she might say? Do her dark hair and eyes hold within themselves forgiveness for any cruelty she might commit, when she lets herself be admired or touched? Are her beauty and sensuality a currency more valuable than any fiction or word man could ever invent?

One of the women who also made the heart of the man of the desert tremble was the guardian of the sand. Surely there would be good things in her character or soul, but her body was more beautiful than the constellations of the sky. Her skin was tan, but in the most sensual tone of all. Her lips were a little full and fleshy, her hair black, dark, and a little wild. In every detail of her body there was a curve or a crevice infinitely interesting, beautiful, and sensual, from her underarm to her neck. Her facial and bodily expressions resembled those of someone caught up in indelicate dreams. In certain parts of her body there was hair that would certainly stir anything dormant into awakening — even the greatest of demigods.

In the end, what difference would it make even if the meaning of life were the desert itself, for we came from dust and to dust we shall return.

When he finally managed to escape the city, the man of the desert realized that everything that seemed to be one thing there was, in truth, another. Inside those mausoleums and towers made of sand, many people could fit, but all of them were empty inside. One could say that in that place, the closer the man of the desert drew to things — whether people, ideas, or feelings — the more they turned into their opposite. And they only seemed noble or beautiful the further away one was from them.

The man of the desert, at the cost of much sacrifice and pilgrimage, came to see the hard truth. What seemed obvious or evident to him was not obvious or evident to anyone else. And never would be. No one there, and nowhere else, could tell him the truth he so sought. Truth could only be spoken directly by God, or by nature itself.

In that place, every word that left their mouths became a lie. Everything they touched became rotten and foul. Everything they looked at became a reason for hatred — even the colors of a butterfly.

The man of the desert left that place with nothing in his hands or pockets, not knowing what tomorrow would bring. He would not know where or on what he would eat. But, almost like a miracle, something sudden happened.

As he made his way back to his tent, he found a chest full of gold. And, besides that, as he turned about thirty years old, he received a gift and a blessing from the guardian of the moon and of the sun.

The guardian of the sun gave the man of the desert a she-wolf. The guardian of the moon gave the man of the desert a cat. And the guardian of the clouds gave him the deepest and lightest sleep he could ever have had in any palace in the world.

The man of the desert set out to cross the land in search of hearing the stories of other peoples and tribes, of telling his own testimony, and also of trading and discovering new spices. Now he traveled mounted on his she-wolf, with his cat and his chest of gold.

Early in his journey, he found a beautiful, serene place inhabited by the guardian of the wind, who was also the guardian of the mountain.

If the man of the desert had almost an obsession with what was just, right, or correct, the man of the mountain told him that the line separating good from evil is thin, just as the line separating justice from injustice, life from death, is thin. The man of the wind told the man of the desert that he should carry nothing heavy with him, and should leave the weight of all the unpleasant, negative, and unjust things he had received to those who had caused them. He should therefore carry with him only the weight of beams of light, the soft breeze of the wind, and whatever could fit in his pack.

After descending from the highlands, he came upon a dark and foul-smelling place he was forced to pass through.

Stranger than the man of the desert is only the guardian of the swamp. The man of the swamp never loved, nor was loved by, anyone. His words are confused and no one understands what comes from his mouth. His sight is blurred, and he does not understand what others say. His mouth and his hands are twisted. He is a being between life and death, neither one thing nor the other. He is not mad, but neither is he normal. He is neither just nor unjust, neither good nor evil. And the only entity who dared to visit or bathe in that place was the goddess of madness.

Curiously, the goddess of madness was not evil. So the man of the desert wondered whether it was worth more to be someone normal but utterly devoid of character, loyalty, and goodwill, or a madman with a good heart. And in that situation, which seemed to offer no way out, the goddess of madness led the man of the desert onto the right path leading out of the swamp. The madman ended up being more useful than the sane.

Only someone as solitary as the man of the desert could possibly like her. Or be mad?

The madness of the guardian of madness was proportional...

The man of the desert finally realized that what was poison to others was his medicine.

Or perhaps I am the one who is completely wrong, expecting things from people that they have no inclination to do, or that they are entirely free to refuse to do.

And before leaving the city, wishing never to set foot there again, the man of the desert asked himself a question.

His solitude was infinite. Never greater than his faith or his love for nature.

The academies there served to create liars, not wise men. In fact —

If the man of the desert made an effort to be just, the others made an effort to be unjust. It seemed they took great delight and joy in committing injustices.

The man of the desert's detachment was not only moral but also aesthetic.

There is nothing more difficult in this world than loving one's enemies as oneself.

To displease them, one need not tell the truth — mere silence is enough. To bother them, one need not do anything. It is enough to have simply never done it.

What bothered the man of the desert most was not his solitude, but how he was treated and seen by others, who judged him with great certainty and arrogance the less they knew him. He had certainly known noble people in this life, but none in that place. With the exception of the guardian of the oceans.

Only with the guardian of the ocean could the man of the desert have deep conversations, for example, about the meaning of life and what happiness is. For the man of the desert, life was something at once small, fleeting, and of infinite beauty. And in his excessive humility, simplicity, and near naivety, he believed that the meaning of life came down simply to being alive. From the guardian of the ocean he heard words and teachings more valuable than any gold from that city.

Despite everything, I am grateful to God, not only for what He gave me, but above all for what He kept away from me. I am grateful to God chiefly for everything He did not give me.

The man of the desert, naively, believed that the citizens of that city valued knowledge — whether knowledge coming from the depths of the soul or from nature itself — for there were many libraries and scholars in that place. But it did not take long for the man of the desert to realize that the people of that place not only hated truth and knowledge, but hated even more any act of goodwill, generosity, justice, or altruism. There were indeed many books in that place, but no knowledge. There were people who had memorized countless things, but all of it was false or empty.

The men of that place, the less they knew, the more certainty and arrogance they had about what they said. The more despicable and wretched they were, the more they considered and judged themselves just, noble, and important.

The man of the desert realized that there he could convince no one of anything, not even of the obvious. And so he realized that what was poison to his countrymen was his medicine.

The desert, though seemingly solitary, harbored and was populated by many entities. Some terrifying, while others were exceedingly pleasurable.

The guardian of the clouds, for instance, allowed the man of the desert to sleep more peacefully and deeply than in any palace of the city or of the world. Even under scorching, extreme heat, she made him feel nothing but a refreshing breeze.

The man of the desert had already resigned himself to living his whole life in purity. But the guardian of the sun had attributes so abundant that they certainly stirred and lit up the man of the desert's imagination.

The guardian of mirrors, when she manifested, would seize his dreams by surprise, making him imagine the most beautiful dancers of the desert naked before him, with their tan, dark skin and their voluptuous dark hair.

The maiden of the sun told the man of the sun he could taste her flower. But he never imagined that in doing so he could see the reflection of every star in the universe and the depths of his own soul through her eyes. That by touching her body he could discover what every word in the world means, and what words cannot say. That he could discover all the secrets of nature and of himself, while she filled his mind and soul with an infinite light and filled his body with an infinite warmth.

The man of the desert, in his infinite simplicity and humility, was afraid to touch the guardian of the sun. He was afraid of hurting her, of being inconsiderate, or of soiling her with the traces of sand still caught between his fingers. But for her, such grains were like a spicy seasoning, or salt. Realizing the situation, she asked him to lie naked on the bed of roses. He, with a shy, subtle smile, thought that whatever she did to his body would be her doing, the same way someone climbs a tree to pick delicious fruit. She then took his hands and began guiding them over her own body, teaching him where to touch, with what force, at what speed, and in what manner — with the same patience and dedication with which a great master teaches a young apprentice to play the cithara.

Could there be anything more divine than thinking of her? Or imagining things about her?

The guardian of the sun was always, at once, so near and so far. She touches his skin every day, even while being so distant. She caresses his eyes and heart every morning. She fully illuminates his mind and imagination.

The same feeling I have looking at the sun, I have looking at her. I can say that the same importance the sun has for butterflies, bees, or a garden, she also has for me.

The man of the desert, so shy, withdrawn, humble, almost timid, nursed a great love for the guardian of the sun. But the condition the universe set for them to be able to make love was that it happen in a room full of tiny ornaments hanging from threads strung across the ceiling, and where, between its four walls, various people would have to pass through the doors and gaps to reach their destination. Musicians, prostitutes, merchants, the curious, beggars, travelers — all could see them naked, and every detail of their bodies, while very curious sounds came from the little ornaments every time someone brushed against them.

The man of the desert became enchanted with the gardens and mountains of the guardian of the sun.

Her gardens were her hair, her eyelashes, even her body hair. Her mountains were her breasts, her lips, and her skin.

But if the man of the desert had any interesting fantasies, it was only with the guardian of the sun. With the guardian of the clouds and of the moon, his curiosity was, instead... subtler. He did not want to touch them, only to see them naked, or making love with another entity, or with themselves.

Like someone who loves a sunset or an eclipse, he only wanted to watch them making love. Whether with others, or with themselves.

The guardian of the moon gave the man of the desert a cat. The guardian of the sun gave the man of the desert a she-wolf. The guardian of the ocean gave him wisdom and stories more valuable than gold.

The man of the desert then set out to wander the infinite desert, mounted on his she-wolf, carrying his black cat, telling his stories and trading along the way.

Every society will always have its men of the desert and its guardians of the moon. What moves them is not hatred for society, but love of solitude.

Love is, quite literally, a warm thing.

The man of the desert spoke not only directly with God, but also with the countless entities that are part of this world and that preceded human existence and consciousness, just as they precede every detail of the soul and the feelings. These entities, unlike the supreme god, had a great desire to make love with other entities. To see them making love, or completely naked.

The man of the desert liked to play at attributing human things to nature. And nature liked to throw at man things that belonged to nature.

The knowledge of society and of language is, in truth, the shadow of true knowledge — knowledge already dead. True knowledge is obtained directly through God and directly through contact with nature.

The men of that city, the city of the lie, should already have been forgotten. But it is worth remembering that the only faith they truly have is that gold and material things have intrinsic value in themselves — as though a small pebble of gold or silver held within it the secret of happiness or love. They have such faith in material things that they would put devout believers to shame. And what if someone does not wish to sell themselves, or bow down for their crumbs? Well, that is something they cannot conceive of or understand. And everything they do is in exchange for crumbs of gold — even killing their fellow men, their brothers, or themselves. Trying to soften or disguise their mediocrity and bad taste, they even utter a few beautiful words... but in practice, their actions always support the opposite of what they say. So we could say that the citizens of that city are those who always say things only to do the opposite in practice.

There is no other word to describe the temples of the city of the lie except ridiculous. People go to those places thinking gold will fall from the sky, or that they will land some highly paid position — one that requires being a remarkable scoundrel to be worthy of it. So we ask ourselves whether that temple is a reflection of that little people, or whether that little people is a reflection of that cursed temple. What is the point of someone seeking a temple only for something material, like someone who does not care whether the gold coins are stained with blood, or whether their origin lies in slavery?

And since everyone in that city is a petty thief, in the end, the ones who harm themselves most are they themselves, not the victims they rob. For after robbing and deceiving one traveler or another, they end up having to deal with thieves just like them, worse, or better. But they always have some beautiful word ready to soften their mediocrity and ill will.

One might say that everything that happens in the mind or in consciousness is the action of a different entity. The individual, in truth, owns nothing, is no one, but a mere shell through which the entities parade, and at times clash with one another. Desire, hatred, frustration, friendship, serenity, and so on...

Just as man and woman exist, so do the sun and the moon exist. In the same way...

This world is permeated by desires that are never fulfilled, and by actions that, even when carried out, awaken no desire at all.

Which is worse — to be bitten by a snake, or to be the snake itself, spending its whole life crawling? To be stung by an insect, or to be the insect itself, to the point of judging as sweet or as honey every kind of rot and filth that exists in this world?

The snake, knowing it will never be a bird, and the worm, knowing it will never be a butterfly or a bee...

We could say that only the solitary and the mad could ever love the man of the desert.

Ah! But there are as many curves in that madwoman's madness as there are in her body.

Despite all this, the man of the desert did not feel sad. After all, is it worse to be bitten by a snake, or to be the snake itself? Is it worse to be stung by an insect, or to be the insect itself?

He turned the man of the desert's small tears into an infinite ocean. Not of sadness or dissatisfaction, but of serenity and understanding.

Without the darkness of the sky, the stars could not shine. And without their shadows, no one would have anywhere to hide or rest.

Without the melancholic waves of the sea, or of the rain, how could the ocean absolve or reflect the light of the sky?

The greater the solitude or the darkness, the greater the brightness that only a single beam of light can have.

One night the guardian of the night gave the guardian of the desert a cat.

The man of the desert knew only two things. One, that solitude is the worst thing that can exist in this world. And the other, that solitude is the best thing that can exist in this life.

The man of the desert knew only one thing. How much the guardian of the moon and of the sun turned his small tears into an ocean full of colors and life. Into a paradisiacal oasis.

One fine day, the guardian of the sun invited the guardian of the desert to see her beautiful garden, if only in a dream.

The day is beautiful. Not more than her eyes.

No word is truer than her body.

Perhaps she is to me what the sun is to the bees, the roses, and the butterflies.

There are things in this world that are seen better with closed eyes,

With eyes completely closed...

Alone, I cannot see who I am.

Alone, I cannot know who I am...

I do not need her to swallow me or devour me in order to be someone. Only that she show me the path of my own metamorphosis.

The only way to know who I am is by looking into her eyes.

It does not matter if I fail. For it seems the fate of every flight is to fall, just as the fate of life is death.

What is life, if not the rupture of what once seemed absolute? If not the end of silence with either the sweetest symphony, or the most terrifying roar?

I do not know whether life is a true awakening, or a falling asleep.

Even though he never touched or saw anyone, this man's life was never solitary. For the guardian of the rain and the guardian of the clouds were always close to his imagination. He always wished, subtly, to watch them through a crack — that is, to imagine them making love, though he never took part. That is the feeling he has looking at nature: spying on the gods making love.

The guardian of the desert was always, at once, so near and so far from the guardian of the sun. Even while so far away, her warmth touches his skin and lights up his imagination.

Among his many travels, the man of the desert also came upon the tribe of the stone-headed men. For those men, everything in the world was rigidly divided — good and evil, justice and injustice, ugliness and beauty, truth and lies. Those men, like those of the arid city, had no inclination whatsoever toward spiritual or moral things. But at least the stone-headed men did not have the malice or the poison of the citizens of the dry city, though they were excessively simplistic in their worldview and their judgment of reality. Unlike the arid city, their tribe was not filled with thieves or traitors.

The end is always more beautiful than the beginning. It should not be a cause for mourning, but for gratitude — because if things have ended, it is because one day they existed at all.

Without its melancholic waves, the ocean could not reflect or absorb the light of the sky.

This was one of the main points of conflict between the man of the desert and the wise men of the city. The wise men said that if someone does no evil deeds, then he is good. The man of

the desert, however, said that even someone who does no evil can still be evil. In such cases, the only reason for not doing evil would be the mere impossibility of doing it, not any noble aspect of character. The wise men considered their people noble because they did not wound anyone with swords or blades — but they lacked the materials or the knowledge to make such tools.

If anyone wished to offend them, all they had to do was tell the truth. But if they lied, that would offend them too. The only way not to offend them was to say only what their little book permitted.

I ask myself how they ever let the man of the desert enter and remain there for so long, given all the differences of character, principle, and intention that existed between him and that little people. Rather than criticize them, I prefer to pose a cunning question about the man of the desert. Could he be the son of an angel and a demon? Could he be the son of a cloud and a serpent, or of a monster and an oasis? After all, even humiliated, he still recognized the beauty of the women of that place. To what extent is desire outside the bounds of morality, or of what is right and just?

If I could write something, it would be for a single purpose: to remember that above God there is no one.

Translation II

Arthur Silva Sacramento -- The Man of the Desert and the Guardian of the Moon.

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The greater the solitude and darkness, the brighter the glow that only a single beam of light can have.

Once upon a time, there was the story of a man who lived his entire life isolated in the desert. The Man of the Desert never knew any other person in his life. Only the Guardian of the Moon and the Guardian of the Sun.

The Man of the Desert, even though he had never been baptized or read any book, not even the Bible, had a great intuition that God existed and was true. Even though he seemed rough, he possessed the most important thing: faith.

With rumors of a great storm approaching, he decided to set out for a very distant city, whose towers were nevertheless visible. He believed that spiritual demons were more harmless than material ones, should they exist there.

New Babylon, the great city of the desert, from afar seemed to be the center of the world. After all, nowhere else were there towers as tall as those, although all of them were made of sand and not of honor. In his immense naivety, the Man of the Desert believed that the inhabitants of that city would have souls as elevated and close to heaven as their towers and mausoleums.

Before the great and seemingly indestructible gate, he was certain that if he entered, he could no longer leave or escape. Once inside the arid city, what most caught his attention was not its architecture, but its sages. The sages of that city did not merely want to castrate and chain all demons, but also all angels.

Those sages deeply hated demons. They only hated them less than they hated angels. In truth, they held a great appreciation for all that was lukewarm and neutral. They cruelly punished both those who were too good and just, and those who were evil.

They hated evil men because they lacked the cunning, the ingenuity, or even the vitality and audacity necessary to commit an evil act. For example, how could someone slander if they were mute? They hated with much more force and intensity men who were good and just, for they considered that their peace of spirit, serenity, and discernment offered a better remedy than any of their weeds could offer, a remedy capable even of healing the eyes in a crystalline way so that one could see both shadows and light with great clarity.

Their dirty and deformed eyes blamed everything they saw on the objects themselves and on other people. They were incapable of seeing any defect or debility that originated from their own soul, their own ignorance, mind, or character. They were excellent at judging others, but incapable of judging themselves.

Because of my solitude, they saw me as worse than a bandit or a prostitute. Even though I had never said or done an evil deed. Or even had ill intent or will.

If the price to draw closer to God is to distance myself further from them, I will do so. What bothers me is not having the contempt of many, but having no one's support. But, if God is by my side, I will need nothing but Him.

Those sages, who considered themselves perfect and untouchable, the majority of whom refused to converse with anyone from another culture, empire, religion, or even from outside, began to do against me what they did best: gossip and slander. They began to judge me not by my actions or who I was, but according to the opinion of others, without ever asking me anything.

They said among themselves: *How can a man who does not believe in our god speak about justice and injustice? How can a man who does not believe in god know what is right and what is wrong?*

The sages of that city declared him a heretic. They affirmed: *What do you mean? You want to prove the existence of God through nature or direct contact? Even worse, you dare to say that in a woman's body, as in a beam of light or an ocean wave, resides the secret to reaching both paradise and hell?*

They affirmed with an air of superiority: *How can a man who claims to have the spirituality of a cloud also have such carnal and hot desire as the sand of the desert?*

Already weary of their pettiness and half-truths, I began to speak only what was in my heart. Neither more nor less. Without worrying if I might deeply offend them or even shock them.

Ah! Guardian of the Sun... The only woman I ever fell in love with in this life.

I can see the reflection of every divine star by looking into her eyes.

Looking into her eyes, I can see not only the depths of my soul, but also every corner of this sublime and perfect universe.

If God is my ground, that is, the foundation that would not let me fall, I could say that she is my garden.

The joy and will to live she gives me is as great as that of God or the sun.

Her eyes are as beautiful as the light of the sun.

Only a miracle could bring a maiden close to someone as solitary as I am.

And if, by great irony, madness, or a twisted line of this world...

Touching her would bring me closer to God than touching the seats of your dirty and corrupted temples?

And if seeing her naked brought me closer to paradise than being inside your rotten, filthy, and lying temples?

And if she brought me closer to God than all the words you could say?

And if the prostitute, even with all her flaws, were still purer and nobler than any of your priests?

If there is something in this world capable of giving me the will to live, why could I not consider it sacred or divine? Why could I not consider that it brings me closer to God?

When everything is dark, I know that God or she can illuminate me. But you cannot.

From that day, when I spoke these things, they never spoke to me again. They began to look at me sideways, with faces of disgust and contempt. They never invited me to their dinners and banquets again, but the truth is that even with all their meat, wine, and gold, I never felt happy among them. They threw me into the gutter with nothing. But until now, God has provided. And He will provide.

I prefer to eat simple and humble food alongside those who understand me than to eat a banquet or luxurious food alongside those who do not understand me. I prefer the company of those whose presence alone fills my void than the company of those who try to buy me with gold and crumbs.

From that day, they began to look at me with more hatred than the devil looked at Jesus Christ. They began to do everything to bring me down. But until now, they haven't succeeded. Until now, the powerful and the superior, the untouchable and indestructible, have not managed to defeat something that is everywhere and nowhere: The feeling of profound solitude. They try, try, try to bring me down in every unimaginable way, but until now they still haven't managed to bring me down. And I wonder why they cannot bring me down even though I am apparently weaker and more vulnerable than they are.

Could it be that in trying to attack and humiliate me, they are only trying to wound their own eyes and their own shadow? I finally decided to distance myself from them, from all of them, for everything I said they would consider madness or an affront, even if that was not my intention. But how can one flee from one's own shadow?

For a plant to grow healthy, it seems it needs a little light and a little shade.

The devil's advocate and the serpent said that one should mitigate their situation. After all, in that city, each generation became worse and more miserable than the previous one. Just or unjust, they were carrying a real burden: living in a decadent society. It was not advantageous for anyone there to be honest or upright. The only way to alleviate their suffering and nausea, their only psychological shield, was to believe that mediocrity was a good thing, since they could not escape it and would not be rewarded for anything good or excessively evil they did. Even the most foolish and naive perceived the malice of that place. Only those who were like them or crazy remained there. Those who had nothing more to gain or lose.

They insisted, saying: Is there nothing there that compensates for their lies? Not even the beauty of their women and the gleam of their false jewels?

How could those men look at the world so maliciously and curse their own lives so much if they themselves built this world? How could they play the victim or the poor thing if they themselves made and created their own laws, rules, and truths, carving every detail of this world in their own image and likeness?

I leave them to amuse themselves among themselves. Now I do not want to be merely on the margins of that city, but also on the margins of all the words they say and invent. Anything they try to involve me in or say about me, I want to be on the margins of their judgments and their truths.

It took me a long time to perceive the subtlety of things. Everything in that city was motivated by ill will and envy. If they memorized the bible, it was with ill intent. If

they invented justice or something apparently good, it was with ill intent. And even if they gave bread, it was with ill intent or vanity. Nothing there was what it seemed. Everything there was a grand illusion.

One cannot underestimate how much a slave can love his own chains.

The Man of the Desert learned a hard lesson that he resisted his entire life. Now he should walk with a sword, a scimitar. Nevertheless, he should keep it always sharp even if he never needed to use it. That people then began to judge him as a criminal or bandit, even though he used the sword only to defend himself. And until then, he had never needed to use it.

Of all the people in that city, perhaps millions or infinite, only the Guardian of the Oceans and the Guardian of the Moon managed to see the soul of the Man of the Desert and how he really was, ceasing his infinite solitude.

That people hated truth as much as lies. They hated good as much as evil. They hated wealth as much as poverty. The only thing they loved was mediocrity!

Contrary to what they think, solitude never bothered me, only their judgment.

They see only what they want or invent. Give them paradise and they will see hell. Give them hell and they will see paradise.

Those sages deeply hated prostitution. They only hated it less than they hated solitude. They hated a lonely man much more than a prostitute. Solitude by itself never bothered me; what bothered me was their judgment.

Those sages had great difficulty distinguishing good from evil. If they could not distinguish good from evil, they also could not see the nuances, details, and gradients between one thing and another. The context and circumstances that could make a letter or word unjust were unthinkable. Even so, they considered themselves perfect and untouchable. What would they think if they had to do something absurd by God's command to prove their faith, like sacrificing their own son on a great stone, with only the guarantee that *God will provide*?

If they were sick or fallen, they also saw the world that way. They sought wealth and prosperity by destroying the things of others, whether material or spiritual, instead of building something for themselves. And so they created a society where all absolute truths and laws are self-destructive, or at best, hypocritical.

That man's goodness was never recognized. As if it were a currency like gold, but a merchant refuses to be paid out of pure ignorance or vanity.

Thinking only of themselves led to social ruin. For no one trusted the coin or product they received, for fear it had been adulterated. On one hand, the masters distrusted that the servants and scribes would rob and betray them, and on the other hand,

such scribes and servants were too lazy and would rather die than work or earn so little. Due to the distrust and misery accumulated in that place, not only material but mainly spiritual, commerce was dying, along with all its history, currency, and promise of any future dignity or prosperity. Due to laziness and detachment, those masters had fewer and fewer people to exploit and mistreat. It was noticeable that in New Babylon, fewer and fewer people were having children, and it was only a matter of time before that people or civilization completely disappeared.

What great feat could be expected from a lukewarm people or civilization? None. Who would be the great hero of this people, be they the cruelest of assassins or the purest of saints? In truth, this people never had any hero. And there would not even be any ruin of their city, for everything they did was using only sand, cheap and abundant material, just like their souls. This people never made any scientific, astronomical, or philosophical discovery. Not even poetic. What could be expected was a sickly hypocrisy where the emptier the words, the more valuable and true they seemed.

A serpent whispered in the ear of the Man of the Desert, asking if there was no compensation there for so much decadence, not even the beauty of those women? What would the Man of the Desert think or feel if a Pharisee woman called his name?

And the snake continued whispering, agitated. And if that tanned tone were the most beautiful and irresistible that skin could have? And if that body the man never touched hid mysteries greater than the city itself, like a shortcut that led both to paradise and to hell? A shortcut that lessened the distance between paradise and hell, bringing them very close, separated by less distance than a needle.

The Man of the Desert never had the pretension of being a caricature imitation of Jesus. For when he wanted to be cunning, it was difficult even for angels or demons to understand him. Especially because he only heard of the bible or Jesus when he was already very old, past thirty or forty. Although he was born and lived alone in the desert his entire life without reading any book, he always had an intuition that God existed.

The great miracle would not be becoming the richest man or having all those women. It would be dispelling all that solitude even while being alone. There would be no greater miracle in this world than someone truly capable of taking away that man's solitude.

That solitude, even seeming so deep or absolute, needed something infinitely less than a kiss to be annihilated. Did it only need someone to see his soul as it truly is?

Even without having known or heard of him, the Man of the Desert would feel happy if he could step on the same ground Jesus stepped on. If he had the privilege of looking at the same sky that Jesus Christ once looked upon.

In the end, what is spirituality? And if in this mad world that woman served to bring him closer to God?

And if even the song of birds served to bring him closer to God? Just like the cadence of each star or cloud.

How could someone prove that God, religion, or spirituality do not exist if the good will or faith of an individual is enough for them to exist? A part of God exists in all of us. If no one denies the existence of happiness or sadness, it would be meaningless to deny faith or something spiritual, because, to explain it crudely, they first materialize within the subject and then are externalized, although nothing proves otherwise. Proof of this is the difference in interpretation that someone with discernment and someone without it can have of the same scripture. How the same word can touch some.

It is not merely a question of faith or self-knowledge, but of discovering the archetypes. Every desert and cloud that exists in the human mind. Every monster and oasis hidden in the depths of consciousness, mind, soul, thought, and feelings.

And since those times, what are the archetypes that have always existed and will exist as long as humanity exists?

In the end, was all that man's solitude in vain? Just like all the times he marveled looking at the stars in the sky through the reflection in her eyes?

Only someone very naive could think they would save that place or transform it for the better. Even the Man of the Desert, the simplest and most naive of men, knew that. The best thing someone unfortunate enough to be born in New Babylon and never corrupted could do was flee that place as soon as possible.

For those men, the important thing was the material. The important thing was the number of women one could accumulate, and not the love one could feel for just one. The important thing was the size of the towers or palaces they could build, and not their unbearable odor and heat. Those men were only capable of seeing the quantity of things, not their quality.

And so they also did in their temples and academies, these "men of quantity." Oh, if a temple is full, it must be because there is true faith and noble teachings there! Oh, if the majority of people believe in something, then it becomes true, an absolute and unquestionable truth.

In those temples, men and women went to shout in an attempt to expel the demons from their own minds or bodies. But, in truth, there is no and never was any demon. Because they themselves are the demons.

For them, crumbs of gold were worth more than any moral, physical, or spiritual aspect. So much so that all crimes in that place were bailable. And even paradise had a price that could be paid in gold.

They were inept at seeing the difference between day and night and the nuance between one and the other. Completely uninterested and lazy at differentiating light from shadows, the fly from the bees, the tares from the wheat, water from wine, and bloody bones from fish meat. They held a great appreciation for lukewarm and neutral things.

I was never accepted in their temple simply for living alone and being solitary. Despite this, there is nothing more beautiful in this life than when a group of people truly wants to reach God.

Their refuge was merely the will of the majority. And it is something that I have never been able to understand: being judged according to the opinion of others instead of being judged by what I am or have done.

The less they knew things, the more certainty and arrogance they had in their judgments. They refused to converse or exchange teachings with those from other cultures or who had a slightly different intellectual or spiritual inclination. They held great contempt not only for the truth but for everything involving character and dignity. The more miserable and unjust they were, the nobler and superior they considered themselves.

The Man of the Desert never had the vanity or pretension of being a caricature imitation of Jesus, but he would be happy if he could set foot on or look at the same sky He looked upon.

How can someone who only sees the quantity of things and not their quality measure or quantify faith, character, or good will?

If those men were only capable of seeing the quantity of things and never their quality, then how could they measure or quantify the character, faith, or courage of someone? Or even madness or desire. If, on one hand...

Men and women went to those temples to shout, trying to expel the demons in their minds, souls, or bodies. But, in truth, there never was nor will be a demon. Because they themselves were the demons.

Truth, for them, was not something logical or rational, but merely what the majority believed. And so was the value of things. What few wanted had little value. What many wanted had great value. If no one wanted something, it was almost certainly something despicable.

Never had the Man of the Desert felt such solitude even while in the city and surrounded by people. Even though he was born and lived his entire life in the desert.

Thus, since everyone had ill will, they judged charcoal as something bad in itself, since no one would polish it until it became a diamond. They judged marble and clay equally despicable, since they all had crooked hands and nothing beautiful could come from where they touched or looked.

And even with all these contradictions, deformities, and imperfections, I doubt there is any people in the desert who pride themselves on speaking of God more than they do!

But would all that multitude together have more faith, character, or dignity than just the Man of the Desert? Together, would they have more melancholy and shadows than the Guardian of the Moon? Would they have the serenity and discernment of the Guardian of the Ocean?

Forgiveness had a price that could be paid in installments. Paid in the form of barter or with prostitutes.

In that city, it was an affront to want to have a wing, whether of an angel or a demon. Just as it was to have the habit of diving deep into the ocean or climbing high mountains.

Only someone very naive could believe they would change that place or transform it into something better.

If I called them demons instead of human beings, I would risk being insensitive in my judgments. But if I called them human beings, I would be unfair to that group or category, for those inhabitants had no humanity, integrity, or dignity.

Those sages not only had great difficulty and disinterest in distinguishing good from evil, light from shadows. They also had difficulties differentiating flies from bees, water from wine, bloody bones from fish fillet. They had absolute certainty that they were perfect. So it was common for them to blame their deformed souls and eyes on everything they looked at.

All this mediocrity, all this pettiness, all this negativity caused a discomfort and nausea in the Man of the Desert that was difficult to describe. In the city and among people, he felt a solitude so great that he had never felt in the desert, even though he was born and lived his entire life there.

I need to have faith. I need to have courage. Do everything within my reach and leave the rest in God's hands. All I need is for the Holy Spirit to be near me.

I know all this may seem like nonsense. But if the call were real, what would it cost me to draw closer to God?

And even if fate were to live my entire life in the desert, would I judge that as a trial or a blessing? Would I judge it as deliverance, a curse, or a miracle? What I mean is, what if all the dirt in my eyes and heart disappeared to the point where I could see how crystalline the water is, how pure and beautiful the sky and clouds are, and how lucid the light is?

I know that no matter how abandoned I may seem, God will always send an angel to protect me.

I asked God to send me a sign. Or for a spirit to manifest or send me a sign, if such things really exist. Then the lights in my room started flickering in a way that had never happened, and I felt a great chill throughout my body. After that, I went for a walk and upon returning home, I saw the sun on the horizon so large, bright, and beautiful as I had never seen in my life.

Would the great miracle be getting rich? Would it be having the most beautiful woman in the world? I just wanted Him to take away all this solitude, and He did.

What is the most beautiful thing in the world? The reflection of the stars in her eyes? Or the reflection of the depths of my soul in her eyes?

Everything there suggested it was the refuge of angels and sages. Their promises of salvation and prosperity, which, like magic, made all this independent of the character or actions of the individual himself. Oh, oh! They discovered or invented a way, a shortcut, to reach paradise even being the most scoundrel, miserable, and cruel wretch that ever existed in this world!

But if the Man of the Desert had a flaw, it was his infinite naivety and simplicity. His humility was so great that even in hell, or before the greatest executioner, he would refuse to complain or be afraid of making wrong judgments about others.

The sages of that city did not believe in the existence of the spiritual world. Despite this, I would not feel embarrassed to be the opposite of them or think the opposite. Perhaps, due to this divergence of principles, I was never well accepted there. Even if I had all the coherent arguments and the best intention in the world, no one in that place would hear or listen to me.

The sages of that city wanted to create a being that was lukewarm, that is, neither just nor unjust, neither too good nor too evil. That is why they did not make great efforts to distinguish good from evil or light from darkness. The sages of that city wanted to chain both angels and demons, depriving them of all feelings, desires, and drives.

The sages of that city held great appreciation for everything that had no heart and was lukewarm. They prided themselves on this, saying it was their absolute truth. Oh, would there not be a double shame in that for anyone's eyes? Both for believing in absolute truths and for...

The great truth is that they educated children from an early age to be a type of amorphous and repulsive being. A type of being so narrow-minded and alienated that they would be devoid of feeling love or hate for anything, devoid of feeling desire or disgust for anything. Their value would not lie in what they are, but only in what they have. A man's value would be reduced to the crumbs of gold he carries. And even his body would be neglected, his mind and soul, for his crumbs of gold would be more important than his heart or his own life.

What would lead someone to have such an inclination towards everything that is lukewarm and neutral? There, they were not content with killing and castrating all demons, but also all angels. Anything that was minimally different from them was already looked upon with suspicion.

Would it be envy, or fear, of everything that a truly good or evil man is capable of doing? Why does the hatred of these supposed sages not only target what is very good or evil, but target all excess of goodness or wickedness?

Oh! But no one doubted those absolute truths. Everything was already so corrupted, disfigured, and turned that no one knew anymore what was true or false. What was left to corrupt or was already corrupted.

For if I had to bet, I would prefer to believe that only the spiritual world exists while the material world is an illusion.

Oh, how can the material world not exist? Only a madman could affirm that, or someone who feeds on stones. So, what would explain someone's sadness increasing as their wealth increases, and someone feeling happy even having nothing or so little? Yes, we have much evidence of how wealth affects the soul and how the soul affects wealth, but we, or this civilization, always privilege one side of the story or one interpretation over another.

The intention of the sages of that city was to create knowledge that would weaken the soul of both angels and demons.

He decided to go to that city even knowing that from there he could not leave or escape. He believed that the solitude he would feel among people would be less than that of the desert. And he believed that spiritual demons would be more harmless than material ones.

The laws of New Babylon, its customs and absolute truths, originated from a decadent and miserable people already quite distant from God and almost forgotten by Him. This was noticeable even in their proverbs and in the supposed wisdom of

the most learned men and women of that place. They said more or less similar things like "Hell is full of good intentions" and from that premise or principle they built all the others. Oh, it is true that even a good or just man can still commit injustices, for only God is perfect. However, they believed so faithfully in their own ideas that they expected a great harvest without having planted anything. They believed that by offering hatred they would receive love, by offering slander they would receive praise. By stabbing someone, they thought they would be received with an embrace. They thought that committing injustices made them better or superior to others.

Everything that people touched rotted. Everything they looked at withered. Everything they said became a lie. Even when they spoke of God, their words became false. For they spoke what is true in a tone of mockery, irony, or sarcasm.

It took me a while to realize that those people had no commitment to truth, character, or prosperity. Their only interest was to humiliate others, even if they gained nothing from it.

That city did not need enemies or wars to be destroyed, but only its own people. The women there no longer had children or did not want to. The men there ordered the women to abort. They abandoned their own offspring in the desert to avoid spending more gold on raising children. Others, in their obsession with memorizing fallacies and climbing the social hierarchy, found this more fun or interesting than having children. It was contradictory that even with all its prostitution and vulgarity, the population of that place kept declining.

Sometimes the greatest evil of all resides precisely in things that seem most normal or harmless. While good hides in what has an extremely monstrous or mad appearance.

The palace that touched the sky turned to ruins, but its shadows remained in our eyes for a long time, either because our eyes were too naive or greedy. We even felt a little of its cool shadow, even though the wall, pillar, and concrete had long disappeared. It took me a while to realize, like a wretch living in paradise or an idiot living in hell, that no worthy man or just woman stayed there for long.

The superiority and nobility of that people existed only in their imagination and their own eyes. They were very good at judging the madness of others, but not their own.

Much later, the Man of the Desert realized that in that city, all men and women of good will refused to live there or set foot there. None of the few worthy people the Man of the Desert knew remained until the city's ruin, only he. If he was afraid of the demon outside the city, he ended up having to face a much worse one, but with a harmless and even victim-like appearance. The Man of the Desert's greatest flaw was his excessive simplicity and naivety, thinking everything was good or tolerable, thinking that all that glitters is gold. He would find or invent an advantage or positive point even if he lived in hell. The grandeur of the city was nothing more than a great

mirage or illusion to attract the most foolish, miserable, desperate, and unwary, for the interior of its inhabitants was more desert-like and arid than the desert itself.

This man's solitude was infinite. But it was not greater than his faith or his love for nature.

New Babylon would not change anyone's life. It would only destroy them. It would destroy them with the promise of a paradise that resides in crumbs of gold and not in the heart or good will. It would destroy them with the promise of a salvation that would only be achieved by assassinating all saints and God.

The energy of that place was so negative that no one stayed more than one night there, like the Guardian of the Night. The Guardian of the Night, like an eclipse, showed herself only once to the Man of the Desert. But that single night was never forgotten by the Man of the Desert, in a very positive and profound way. It is curious that someone known only for a night or a day can be more important than a multitude of people with whom one has lived for all eternity. The Guardian of the Ocean, in turn, seemed to have been an angel sent by God to help the Man of the Desert in his most difficult and solitary torments, offering him knowledge more valuable than gold or wheat, and an abundance of serenity where there was not even a drop of water, but only despair.

The Man of the Desert was never well regarded by the inhabitants of the desert city. His feelings, character, or intentions were never taken into consideration. In that place, only those with more jewels or who memorized the greatest number of fallacies had value. We could even say that the greater the Man of the Desert's goodwill, the greater the contempt, hostility, and distrust with which he was treated by others. A serpent whispered in his ear saying it was customary in that place that the more unjust people were, the more they claimed to be the victims.

In that city, there was a very dangerous assassin. But how to capture him if he is hidden in every shadow and every crevice? If he can hide behind every dream, mirage, or even behind silence or oblivion?

How to defeat him if the more he is humiliated, the stronger he returns? If the more he is despised, the more independent he becomes? If the more silence he receives, the more his actions speak or shout for themselves? If the more he is trampled, the more solid he becomes, as if he were the very ground? If the more they try to imprison him, the more children he brings into this world, continuing his dynasty.

The great thief became the king of New Babylon. The great assassin became the saint and hero of New Babylon. This man was remembered by every subject and scribe until the disappearance of that civilization;

But no one is greater than God.

But no one is greater than time.

I see that time is my best ally. I see that time is my only avenger. For everything came from dust and to dust it shall return.

How many imbecilic individuals exist in the world, or who like to be deceived, to believe that someone's value lies merely in having come from a place or frequented a city? And they carry with them countless scrolls and useless papers that are worth nothing anywhere in the world.

For a soulless man, gold is worth a lot. For a man with a golden soul, even small things can have value.

What good is having a lot of gold if you have no desire to spend it, no place to spend it, or are never content with what you spend?

For what reasons would someone set foot there if the city did not offer so many promises, advantages, and crumbs? If it did not offer a salvation that actually becomes self-destruction. If it did not seem to be the center of the world, if its people did not seem to be the great victim or the last grain of the desert, if many travelers were not blinded by their own misery, cunning, or naivety? What would become of this city if no traveler did not feel bored and empty, considering they have nothing to lose but dignity? For not even the gold they promised did they offer!

Solitude is indeed something bad. But living among those people was more solitary than the desert itself. What is better, if inevitable, a drop or a bottle of poison?

It took me about thirty years living in the city to convince myself that their poison is my remedy and vice versa.

The desert city is a great mirage that deceives even the smartest. Its shadow, which seems refreshing and the result of something grand, is actually the fruit of a ruin, and it is only a matter of time until the shadow itself disappears.

Good, to combat evil, does not need rewards.

Good, to combat evil, does not need applause or promises.

And if God wanted to take revenge on this people who no longer have the slightest vestige of loyalty or dignity, so corrupted that they no longer know what is truth or lie, no longer know what is corrupted or has become corrupted, by gradually increasing the heat to an unbearable point, until in another place a new people arises that is not corrupted, fallen, or sick from its origin or beginning like this one? A people devoid of all the material flaws and innate spiritual ills of the people of New Babylon?

How to discover what is hidden in my mind or soul? How to imagine the desert or her completely naked? The reflection of each star in her eyes when I look at her.

Sometimes the miracle or trial depends only on the river from which one chooses to drink water. Everything is and always was before our eyes. But the great question or inquiry is whether we want to open our eyes to see or not. All mysteries cease to be mysteries. And all problems are solved. Completely diluted. Completely forgotten.

The laws, religion, and customs of that place originated from a totally miserable, weak, and decadent people, and not from a noble or ambitious people. Thus, every detail and crevice in that place, whether material, spiritual, or intellectual, was totally corrupted and infested with insects. The law, religion, absolute truths, and even the language of that place were tainted or soaked by a petty and mean spirit, incapable of seeing or considering anything good that could exist in this world.

That people repaid love with hatred and goodwill with ill will. There was nothing in the world they hated more than truth or someone with character. The less they knew or understood something, the more arrogance and certainty they had in their judgments. The more unjust and miserable they were, the more they thought themselves noble or the victims.

Was what God did a trial or a strengthening? Was what God did a punishment or a blessing difficult to understand?

And even if they had uncertainty about the next day, they nurtured a courage and faith that would be the only things capable of preventing them from...

The Man of the Desert, in his immense simplicity, entered the city even knowing that from there he could not leave. And we do not know the exact reason, whether it was to flee a great desert storm or a trial.

Most of the Man of the Desert's enemies are foolish. For they believe that by defeating him, they will be annihilating their own shadows or blinding their own eyes.

The Man of the Desert is the very shadow and the very eyes of all those who try to pursue him or humiliate him.

During his long journey, the Man of the Desert did not spend forty days in the desert, but all eternity. The Man of the Desert never had any friends. Only the Guardian of the Ocean.

If his intention was to flee a physical or material demon, he ended up encountering an infinitely greater one. But it was a spiritual demon, an invisible and silent demon. A demon that did not stab him with knives but with contempt, with indifference.

He wondered if the fault was his or others'. After all, everyone there said that solitude was something bad. And not infrequently, the people of that place considered the dirt in their eyes as if it existed in the things themselves. That is, it

was common for them to judge gold or wheat as if they were rotten when, in truth, the dirt was entirely in their filthy and diseased eyes.

He thought he would have all the answers to his spiritual and material questions there. But he was completely mistaken.

That city was infinitely miserable. Not only spiritually but also economically. It was customary for parents to have to choose between sacrificing their wife or their offspring due to lack of food. But contradictorily, no one there wanted to work or plant even to feed themselves. They lamented and always blamed those who had no fault at all. The inhabitants of the city of sand or desert had the strange custom or taste of only desiring what was stolen or taken from others, even if it was dignity or self-esteem.

They prided themselves on their great palaces and mausoleums made of sand. But what is the use of building grand, tall, or seemingly golden things if all the people inside have empty hearts?

The main flaw of the men and women of the desert city is believing that the more well-intentioned an individual is, the greater the threat they represent. Indeed, hell is full of good intentions. But if there were no good intentions or goodwill in this world, what would remain of it? After all, does anyone believe that an abundant tree can grow from poison or rot? They only want to harvest much and be prosperous without doing or planting anything, but the men and women of that place have an inexplicable delight in harming others, even if they end up with more losses than the victims.

The Man of the Desert, sometimes in his excess of humility bordering on a vice, refused to point out what was right or wrong for fear of judging people in a way that was not absolute or perfectly true. Fearing or being hesitant to bother others, even if he was right or had a shred of reason. But it was notorious that the more miserable that people were, the nobler they thought themselves. The less they knew, the more certainty they had in their judgments. The more injustices they committed, the more they thought themselves just or the victims, and so on. The less someone depended on them, the more they treated them with contempt and humiliation.

It wasn't long before the Man of the Desert realized that in that great city, which seemed to be the center of the world and the redeemer of all noble truths, of the stars and justice, where everything seemed full, grand, or golden, there was in truth nothing. There were many books, many words, but no knowledge, only fallacies. There were many beautiful speeches and words about "ethics," "justice," "dignity," but in practice, no one there had the moral standing to judge anyone. And whoever refused to place offspring in that miserable and decadent place was seen and humiliated in a way far worse than a thief or murderer.

The greatest scribes of that place stood out for their complicated use of language. But behind their words, there was nothing. The important thing was not the subject possessing knowledge, but using it as a tool to climb the social pyramid. Thus, the children of that place studied a lot from an early age, for countless hours, but the more they read, the less they learned. Those words were devoid of meaning, and behind them there was only the cunning to obtain the scroll that attested to the great number of fallacies or numbers a subject was able to memorize. But if he were left in the middle of the jungle, the desert, or even in another city, he would find no use for everything he had forcibly learned.

The Man of the Desert, in search of a remedy or anesthesia for his solitude, traversed every hole, every alley, every sewer and fetid back alley of that place, but he realized that that city and its citizens offered more solitude than spending all eternity in the desert. Nothing made them prouder than excluding others, even if they had nothing useful to offer.

The Man of the Desert's main mistake was seeking truth or something noble in a nest of snakes. But how could he have realized this if he was born there? He always lived surrounded by serpents, but he never saw himself or perceived himself as one.

It seems that what feeds them is something very bad. And they are so concerned with feeding this bad and negative feeling that they end up forgetting to take care of their own house, their own altar, and the city's harvest, as well as any garden or even their own food. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the people of that place, besides their moral and spiritual defects, were literally and excessively weak and ugly.

To compensate for their weakness and ugliness, they thought that committing injustices would make them strong.

Certainly, the Man of the Desert's greatest flaw was never starting a conversation. Silence seemed to him to be more of an ally than an enemy. This trait of character or spirit made others see him as an outlaw, a thief, or someone very despicable and undesirable. How could he persuade and deceive people to plunder their gold or seduce women without loving them? In that city, the value of men was measured by the amount of gold and women they had. They did not consider whether the gold was stolen or stained with blood, nor whether those women had a monstrous appearance, as well as character and odor.

For the worshippers of the god of lies, the Man of the Desert was the most despicable and repugnant being who had ever set foot on this earth or passed through the desert. But in his practical actions, he never stole, lied, attacked, or criticized anyone. Even his somewhat flawed feelings he kept to himself.

Because the Man of the Desert did not have the best appearance or rhetoric, all his other qualities were despised. His words had no importance to others, since he had no fine clothes and did not wear beautiful jewels. Any possibility of prospering or

assuming a better position in this society was boycotted, practically preventing him from surviving in that place. For the people of that place, everything boiled down to having a good appearance and rhetoric. Things like "justice," "truth," "faith," "character," "honesty," "dignity," "honor," or "integrity" were completely foreign concepts to the people of that place.

That city was so miserable, both morally and economically, that there was no one to take him seriously or give importance to his words. His arguments or lessons seemed like trying to convince flies, pigs, and vultures not to eat carrion. That place was so arid that no plant or fruit grew there.

The temples of that place were the most horrible places he had seen before crossing the desert. After all, people went to the temple with the faith that gold would rain from the sky, not with a moral, intellectual, or spiritual objective. They wanted to gain gold not through the sweat of their own work or self-cultivation, but by begging God, whom they did not wish to know anything about. They went to the temples with the objective of magically becoming rich, not to do good or learn to do something just or worthy. They went to the temples nurturing hope for the miracle of assuming the high positions in that society, which only the greatest of cowards and scoundrels would be fit to hold. The temples of that place, despite being crowded, were the complete negation of God, whatever He may be, and a distortion of spirituality. There was a great faith in something that is the opposite of faith. A faith that did not serve to illuminate the world but to darken it. But, for the men and women of that place, truth was only what the majority believed or said, even if the flock was walking towards the abyss. So, for this miserable people, being able to say the word "god" was a refuge and compensation for all their rottenness.

In the temple, they went to shout. Men and women shouted to try to expel the demons from their souls and consciousness. But, in truth, there never were or had been demons. Because they themselves were the demons.

The Man of the Desert searched in every alley of that place for someone to tell him the truth he always needed. The Man of the Desert searched in every sewer of that decadent city for a refuge from his solitude. A remedy for his solitude. He sought salvation or a remedy that no one in the world could give him. But he realized, at the cost of an ocean of tears, that no one in the world could see his heart or understand his ideas and intentions. Only God and nature itself could understand him.

The Man of the Desert had the opportunity to lift his head once more just to observe the infinite beauty of the sky and the sun.

All hatred, contempt, and hostility I do not carry with me, but I leave that weight solely for them. In fact, I carry nothing with me, except the wind itself and the ephemeral lights of the morning.

The main characteristic of the Man of the Desert is how much he hates injustice. He values justice more than anything in this world, even more than gold or glory. This

seems to be the center of his personality, existence, or conduct. But the Man of the Desert sometimes wonders how many things exist in this world that are neither just nor unjust. For example, imagining the Guardian of the Sun completely naked and her golden skin is that just or unjust? Is it moral or immoral? Because in practice, he is not performing any action, not touching anyone, not even speaking. He is just dreaming. Or delusional. He is not betraying anyone in his imagination or intentions, for he has always lived alone. He wonders if there are things in this world that are perhaps not just, or are neither just nor unjust, but that could be a coin or compensation for something just, like incense, silk, or opium.

The Man of the Desert, despite his great goodwill and appreciation for justice, always had very strange dreams. Not infrequently, he imagined himself making love to the Guardian of the Sun when the desert heat became scorching. But his truly strange and recurring dreams were with a male entity, overly fat and smiling, who fed on women. These women were kept inside jars with fruit jams or honey, asleep. The entity then put these women on the spoon as if each one were the size of a grain of rice or wheat. The more the entity brought that spoon near its mouth, the more the desire and heat of the women increased to the point where they began to masturbate and kiss each other. The great climax or orgasm happened when he literally chewed, crushed, and swallowed them all, inevitably killing them.

Another strange and recurring dream of the Man of the Desert was being lost in infinite alleys and streets while everyone around remained indifferent. And the only way to save himself was by invading and jumping over the wall of some houses.

The Man of the Desert's relationship with the Guardian of the Moon was also very curious. He did not feel the desire to touch her, but only the curiosity to see her naked. He did not want to kiss her but just see her making love to others or to herself.

In his deepest dreams and illusions, the Man of the Desert's only desire was that the differences between heaven and the ocean would become very small. Or that they would become practically none. That every beautiful flight, like that of a butterfly, would be followed by an inevitable fall and vice versa. That the difference between love and solitude would be excessively subtle, just like the difference between good and evil. Between truth and lies, between being the culprit or the victim.

In every drop of the ocean, there could be an infinity greater than itself.

In every beam of light, there could be something brighter and more dazzling than the sun itself.

Her kiss could wound my heart more than if someone thrust a dagger into it.

Some star would still shine in the sky even if all other things were forgotten.

The Man of the Desert had the intuition that in his mind, soul, or consciousness, there were many monsters, entities, and places, as well as remnants and ruins, which he did not choose to have or carry with him.

Such places and entities, like a mirage or illusion,

These entities, curiously, were organs or cells of other entities and so on, infinitely and successively.

Basically, all entities had some kind of desire or sexual imagination, except the supreme god.

Is it possible for someone to be very just in some things and very unjust in others? Like someone who sometimes loves and other times beats, sometimes gives and other times steals. Is it possible for someone to be good in some things and bad in others? Like someone who loves one person deeply and mistreats another. Is it possible that someone can be or do infinite good or bad things, and how could we judge them? Is it just or unjust? What would be the measure of justice if it were not just one action, but infinite?

Is her golden skin compensation for any injustice she might commit? Are her abundant lips fair compensation for any lie or wrong word she might say? Does her dark hair and eyes hold within themselves the forgiveness of any cruelty she might commit when they allow themselves to be admired or touched? Is her beauty and sensuality a more valuable currency than any fiction or word the man could invent?

One of the women who also made the Man of the Desert's heart race was the Guardian of Sand. There were certainly good things in her character or soul, but her body was more beautiful than the constellations in the sky. Her skin was tanned, but in the most sensual tone possible. Her lips were a little large and fleshy, her hair was black, dark, and somewhat wild. In every detail of her body, there was an infinitely interesting, beautiful, and sensual curve or crevice, from her armpit to her neck. Her facial and bodily expressions seemed like those one has when struck by indelicate dreams. In certain parts of her body, there was hair that certainly instigated anything dormant to awaken, even the greatest demigod.

If in the end what difference does it make even if the meaning of life were the desert, for we came from dust and to dust we shall return.

When he finally managed to escape the city, the Man of the Desert realized that everything that seemed like one thing there was, in truth, another. In those mausoleums and towers made of sand, many people could fit, but all of them were empty inside. It could be said that in that place, the closer the Man of the Desert got to things, whether people, ideas, or feelings, the more they transformed into their opposite. And they only seemed noble or beautiful when one was far from them.

The Man of the Desert, at the cost of much sacrifice and pilgrimage, realized the harsh truth. What seemed obvious or evident to him was not obvious or evident to anyone else. And it never would be. No one there, or in any other place, could tell the truth he so sought. The truth could only be told directly by God or by nature itself.

In that place, every word that came out of their mouths became a lie. Everything they touched became rotten and fetid. Everything they looked at was reason for hatred, even the colors of a butterfly.

The Man of the Desert left that place with nothing in his hands and pockets and without knowing the next day. He would not know where or with what to feed himself. But, almost like a miracle, something sudden happened.

While heading to his tent, he found a chest full of gold. And, furthermore, as he was about thirty years old, he received a gift and blessing from the Guardian of the Moon and the Sun.

The Guardian of the Sun gifted the Man of the Desert with a she-wolf. The Guardian of the Moon gifted the Man of the Desert with a cat. And the Guardian of Clouds gifted him with the deepest and lightest sleep he would have in any palace in the world.

The Man of the Desert began to cross the desert in search of hearing the stories of other peoples and tribes, to tell his testimony, and also to trade and discover new spices. He now rode on his she-wolf, with his cat and his chest of gold.

Early in his journey, he found a beautiful and serene place inhabited by the Guardian of the Wind, who was also the Guardian of the Mountain.

If the Man of the Desert had almost an obsession with what was just, right, or correct, the Mountain Man told him that the line separating good from evil is thin, as is the line separating justice from injustice, life from death. The Wind Man told the Man of the Desert that he should not carry anything heavy with him and should leave the weight of all unpleasant, negative, and unjust things he received to those who caused them. He should, therefore, carry with him only the weight of the beams of light, the gentle breeze of the wind, and everything that would fit in his backpack.

After descending the field, he saw a dark and fetid place through which he was forced to pass.

Stranger than the Man of the Desert is only the Guardian of the Swamp. The Swamp Man never loved or was loved by anyone. His words are confused, and no one understands what comes out of his mouth. His sight is blurred, and he does not understand what others say. His mouth and hands are crooked. He is a being between life and death, neither one thing nor the other. He is not mad, but he is not

normal either. He is neither just nor unjust, neither good nor evil. And the only entity that had the courage to visit or bathe in that place was the Goddess of Madness.

Curiously, the Goddess of Madness was not evil. So the Man of the Desert wondered if it was more valuable for someone to be normal, but completely devoid of character, loyalty, and goodwill, or a madman with a good heart? And in that situation that seemed to have no way out, the Goddess of Madness led the Man of the Desert to the right path that led out of the swamp. The madman ended up being more useful than the normal ones.

Only someone as lonely as the Man of the Desert could like him. Or a madman?

The madness of the Guardian of Madness was proportional...

The Man of the Desert finally realized that what was poison for others was his remedy.

Or perhaps I am totally wrong, expecting things from people that they have no inclination to do or have total freedom to disobey.

And before leaving the city, wishing never to set foot there again, the Man of the Desert asked himself a question.

His solitude was infinite. But no more than his faith or love for nature.

The academies there served to create liars, not sages. In fact...

If the Man of the Desert made an effort to be just, the others made an effort to be unjust. It seemed they felt a great delight and joy in committing injustices.

The Man of the Desert's detachment was not only moral but also aesthetic.

There is nothing more difficult in this world than loving one's enemies as oneself.

To displease them, you don't need to tell the truth; just remain silent. To bother them, you don't need to do something. It's enough to have never done anything.

What bothered the Man of the Desert most was not solitude, but how he was treated and seen by other people who judged him with great certainty and arrogance the less they knew him. Certainly, he met noble people in this life, but none in that place. Except for the Guardian of the Oceans.

Only with the Guardian of the Ocean could the Man of the Desert have deep conversations, for example, about the meaning of life and what happiness is. For the Man of the Desert, life was something at once small, ephemeral, and of infinite beauty. And in his excessive humility, simplicity, and almost naivety, he thought the

meaning of life boiled down to being alive. From the Guardian of the Ocean, he heard words and teachings more valuable than any gold from that city.

Despite everything, I am grateful to God not only for what He gave me but mainly for what He kept away from me. I am grateful to God mainly for everything He did not give me.

The Man of the Desert, naive, believed that the citizens of that city valued knowledge, whether knowledge coming from the depths of the soul or from nature itself, for there were many libraries and doctors in that place. But it wasn't long before the Man of the Desert realized that the people of that place not only hated truth and knowledge but hated even more any act of goodwill, generosity, justice, or altruism. In that place, there were indeed many books, but no knowledge. There were people who memorized infinite things, but they were all false or empty.

The men of that place, the less they knew, the more certainty and arrogance they had about what they said. The more despicable and miserable they were, the more they considered and judged themselves just, noble, and important.

The Man of the Desert realized that there he could not convince anyone about anything, not even the obvious. So he realized that what was poison for his countrymen was his remedy.

The desert, despite appearing solitary, was inhabited and populated by many entities. Some terrifying, others excessively pleasurable.

The Guardian of Clouds, for example, allowed the Man of the Desert to sleep more serenely and deeply than in any palace in the city or the world. Even under scorching and extreme heat, she made him feel nothing but a refreshing breeze.

The Man of the Desert was already resigned to living his whole life in purity. But the Guardian of the Sun had attributes so abundant that they certainly stirred and illuminated the Man of the Desert's imagination.

The Guardian of Mirrors, when she manifested, raptured and took his dreams by surprise, making him imagine the most beautiful dancers of the desert naked before him, with their tanned, dark skin and their black, voluminous hair.

The Sun Maiden told the Man of the Sun that he could taste her flower. But he did not imagine that by doing so he could see the reflection of every star in the universe and the depths of his soul through her eyes. Touching her body he could discover what every word in the world means and what words cannot say. He could discover all the secrets of nature and of himself while she filled his mind and soul with infinite light and filled his body with infinite heat.

The Man of the Desert, in his infinite simplicity and humility, was afraid to touch the Guardian of the Sun. Afraid of hurting her, of being inconvenient, or of dirtying her

with the remnants of sand still between his fingers. But for her, such grains were like a spicy seasoning or salt. Realizing the situation, she asked him to lie naked on the bed of roses. He, opening a shy and subtle smile, thought that everything she did with his body would be her fault, just as someone climbs a tree to pick delicious fruits. She then held his hands and began to pass them over her own body, teaching him where to touch, with what force, with what speed, and in what way, with the same patience and dedication that a great master teaches a young apprentice to handle the cittern.

Would there be anything more divine than thinking about her? Or imagining things about her?

The Guardian of the Sun was always at once so close and so distant. She touches your skin every day even while being so distant. She caresses your eyes and heart in the morning. She fully illuminates your mind and imagination.

The same feeling I have looking at the sun, I have looking at her. I can say that the same importance the sun has for butterflies, bees, or the garden, she also has for me.

The Man of the Desert, so shy, withdrawn, humble, almost cowardly, nurtured a great love for the Guardian of the Sun. But the condition the universe imposed for them to make love was to do it in a room full of tiny ornaments hanging on strings from the ceiling, where, between the four walls, various people would have to pass through doors and gaps to reach their destination. Musicians, prostitutes, merchants, curious onlookers, beggars, travelers—all could see them naked and every detail of their bodies while very curious sounds came from the little ornaments every time someone bumped into them.

The Man of the Desert was enchanted by the Guardian of the Sun's gardens and mountains.

Her gardens were her hair, her eyelashes, down to her body hair. Her mountains were her breasts, her lips, and her skin.

But if the Man of the Desert had interesting fantasies, it was only with the Guardian of the Sun. With the Guardian of Clouds and the Moon, his curiosity was more interesting and... subtle. He did not want to touch them, but only to see them naked or making love to another entity or to themselves.

Like someone who loves the sunset or the eclipse, he just wanted to see them making love. Whether with others or with themselves.

The Guardian of the Moon gifted the Man of the Desert with a cat. The Guardian of the Sun gifted the Man of the Desert with a she-wolf. The Guardian of the Ocean gifted him with the wisdom and stories more valuable than gold.

The Man of the Desert then began to wander through the infinite desert riding his she-wolf and carrying his black cat to tell his stories and trade.

Every society will always have its Men of the Desert and Guardians of the Moon. What moves them is not hatred of society, but love for solitude.

Love is literally a hot thing.

The Man of the Desert not only spoke directly with God but also with the infinite entities that are part of this world and that preceded human existence and consciousness, as well as every detail of his soul and feelings. The entities, unlike the supreme god, had a great desire to make love to other entities. To see them making love or completely naked.

The Man of the Desert liked to play by attributing human things to nature. And nature liked to throw natural things at man.

The knowledge of society and language is actually the shadow of true knowledge, a knowledge already dead. True knowledge is obtained directly from God and directly through contact with nature.

The men of that city, the city of lies, should have already been forgotten. But it is worth remembering that the only faith they have is that gold and material things have intrinsic value in themselves, as if a little stone of gold or silver held within it the secret of happiness or love. They have so much faith in material things that they would leave devotees impressed. And if someone does not want to sell out or bow down for their crumbs? Well, that is something they cannot conceive or understand. And everything they do is in exchange for crumbs of gold, even killing their fellow men, brothers, or themselves. Trying to soften or disguise their mediocrity and bad taste, they even utter some beautiful words... But, in practice, their actions always support the opposite of what they say. So we can say that the citizens of that city are those who always say one thing to do the opposite in practice.

There would be no other word to refer to the temples of the city of lies other than ridiculous. Oh, people go to these places thinking that gold will fall from the sky or that they will assume offices that pay very well, but for which one must be a notable scoundrel to be worthy of them. So we ask ourselves: is this temple the reflection of these people, or are these people the reflection of this cursed temple? What sense is there in someone seeking a temple for merely material things, like someone who does not care if the gold coins are stained with blood or if their origin is slavery?

And since everyone in that city is a petty thief, in the end, the ones who harm themselves the most are they themselves, not the victims they rob. For after robbing and deceiving one or another traveler, they end up having to deal with thieves equal to, worse, or better than themselves. But they always have a very beautiful word to soften their mediocrity and ill will.

It could be said that everything that happens in the mind or consciousness is the action of a different entity. The individual, in truth, owns nothing, is no one, but a mere vessel through which entities parade and sometimes clash. Desire, hatred, frustration, friendship, serenity, and so on...

Just as there are men and women, there is the sun and the moon. In the same way...

This world is permeated by desires that are never fulfilled and by actions that, even if carried out, do not have or awaken any desire.

What is worse, being bitten by a snake or being the snake itself that spends its entire life crawling? Being bitten by an insect or being the insect itself to the point of judging every kind of rot and filth in this world as sweet or honey?

The snake knowing it will never be a bird, and the worm knowing it will never be a butterfly or bee...

We can say that only the solitary and the mad could like the Man of the Desert.

Ah! But there are as many curves in that little madwoman's madness as in her body.

Despite all this, the Man of the Desert did not feel sad. After all, is it worse to be bitten by a snake or to be the snake itself? Is it worse to be bitten by an insect or to be the insect itself?

He transformed the Man of the Desert's small tears into an infinite ocean. Not of sadness or dissatisfaction, but of serenity and understanding.

Without the darkness of the sky, the stars could not shine. And without their shadows, no one would have where to hide or rest.

Without the melancholy waves of the sea or the rain, how could the ocean absorb or reflect the light of the sky?

The greater the solitude or darkness, the brighter the glow that only a single beam of light can have.

One night, the Guardian of the Night gifted the Guardian of the Desert with a cat.

The Man of the Desert only knew two things. One is that solitude is the worst thing that can exist in this world. And the other is that solitude is the best thing that can exist in this life.

The Man of the Desert only knew one thing. How the Guardian of the Moon and the Sun transformed his small tears into an ocean full of colors and life. Into a paradisiacal Oasis.

One beautiful day, the Guardian of the Sun invited the Guardian of the Desert to see her beautiful garden, even if only in a dream.

The day is beautiful. No more than your eyes.

No word is truer than your body.

Perhaps she is for me what the Sun is for bees, roses, and butterflies.

There are things in the world that are better seen with closed eyes.

With eyes completely closed...

Alone, I cannot see who I am.

Alone, I cannot know who I am...

I don't need her to swallow or devour me to be someone. Just for her to tell me the path of my own metamorphosis.

The only way to know who I am is by looking into her eyes.

It doesn't matter if I fail. For it seems the destiny of every flight is the fall, just as life's destiny is death.

What is life if not the rupture of what seemed absolute? If not the end of silence with the sweetest symphony or the most terrifying crash?

I don't know if life is a real awakening or a fading away.

Even never touching or seeing anyone, this man's life was never solitary. For the Guardian of Rain and the Guardian of Clouds were always near his imagination. He always wanted, subtly, to look at them through the crack, that is, to imagine them making love, though he never participated. That is the feeling he has looking at nature, spying on the gods making love.

The Guardian of the Desert was always at once so close and distant from the Guardian of the Sun. Even being so distant, her heat touches his skin and illuminates his imagination.

Among his countless journeys, the Man of the Desert also encountered the tribe of men with stone heads. For those men, everything in the world was rigidly divided: good and evil, justice and injustice, ugly and beautiful, truth and lies. These men, like those from the arid city, had no inclination or propensity for spiritual or moral things. But, at least, the stone-headed men did not have the malice or venom of the citizens of the dry city, but they were overly simplistic in their worldview and judgment of reality. Unlike the arid city, their tribe was not permeated by thieves or traitors.

The end is always more beautiful than the beginning. It should not be a reason for lamentation but for gratitude, because if things have ended, it is because one once had them or they existed.

Without its melancholy waves, the ocean could not reflect or absorb the light of the sky.

These were one of the main points of contention between the Man of the Desert and the sages of the city. The sages said that if someone does not do evil deeds, then they are good. The Man of the Desert, however, said that even someone who does not do evil can continue being evil. In such cases, the only reason for not doing evil would be the mere impossibility of doing so, not any noble aspect of character. The sages considered their people noble because they did not harm anyone with swords or cities, but they did not have the materials or knowledge to make such tools.

If someone wanted to offend them, they just had to tell the truth. But if they lied, they would also offend. The only way not to offend them was to say only what their little book allowed.

I wonder how they let the Man of the Desert enter there and stay for so long despite all the differences in character, principles, and intentions between him and those people? Instead of criticizing them, I prefer to ask a cunning question about the Man of the Desert. Would he be the son of an angel and a demon? Would he be the son of a cloud and a serpent, or of a monster and an oasis? After all, even humiliated, he still recognized the beauty of the women of that place. To what extent is desire on the margins of morality or what was right and just?

If I could write something, it would be with a single purpose. To remember that above God there is no one.